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Palestinian Affairs

Sha'th on Authority's Economic Position, Jerusalem

PM2106110094 London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT in Arabic 20 Jun 94 p 5

[Interview with Dr. Nabil Sha'th, 'Arafat's political adviser, by Mahmud Abu-'Ubayd; place and date not given]

[Excerpts] [Abu-'Ubayd] Dr. Sha'th, what are your feelings on the first day of your assuming the duties of your post?

[Sha'th] I am very happy and optimistic, especially as I see a readiness for the building stage in the eyes of my people and colleagues, and I hope we will succeed in building our state with Jerusalem as its capital.

[Abu-'Ubayd] You talk about Jerusalem before you have reached it, and Israel continues to make statements confirming that the [Palestinian] Authority will not go beyond the boundaries of self-rule or reach Jerusalem. Besides, Jerusalem is not included in the self-rule budget.

[Sha'th] The new authority will develop and reach Jerusalem. Israel can say whatever it likes, but the reality of the negotiations is another thing. They [Israelis] will not be able to impose their will on us. The National Authority's institutions are being set up in Gaza and Jericho. But the other institutions have to be in Jerusalem. In other words, the National Authority's ministries will be based in Gaza and Jericho, while the other economic and social institutions will be based in Jerusalem. Because Jerusalem is the capital of our state. This is the accurate implementation of the agreement, which stresses the need to implement it within the framework of international Resolution No. 242.

I would like also to point out that the new authority will devote great attention to Jerusalem, especially with regard to its building and reconstruction. Incidentally, this was part of the agreement with the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, which stressed its willingness to contribute to bolstering Jerusalem. We will do our utmost to build houses, public facilities, and institutions in Arab Jerusalem.

[Abu-'Ubayd] What is the nature of the financial crisis facing the new Palestinian Authority?

[Sha'th] There is no crisis now. At the donor states meeting in Paris we managed to agree on covering the deficit in current expenditures. And we will try to collect taxes to avoid an increase in the deficit. We expect to face some difficulties in collecting these taxes within the coming four months. This is why the donor states will cover this deficit. The donor states decided to grant us $42 million in cash, and they have indeed given us this sum, which I have brought with me to the [Gaza] Strip. [passage omitted]

[Abu-'Ubayd] Has the Palestinian position on the Arab boycott [of Israel] changed?

[Sha'th] We will comply with the economic agreement signed with Israel. We will not continue the boycott, by virtue of the existence of an economic agreement signed between us and them.

However, this agreement does not mean ending the Arab boycott. There is nothing to compel the Arab states to import from Israel. On the contrary, the economic agreement signed with Israel does not allow us to reexport products from Israel. The first and second tables in the economic agreement allow us only to import what is required to meet local needs. The agreement does not allow us to reexport Israeli goods.

Relations to be established between the Arab states and Israel will not be conducted via the Palestinians. We will not be a bridge before a full peace has been achieved, nor will we agree to play a broker's role.

Sha'th Briefs Authority Members on Shahaq Talks

TA2006045494 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in English 0400 GMT 20 Jun 94

[Text] Nabil Sha'th will not come to East Jerusalem today. Qol Yisra'el's reporter, quoting authoritative sources, says he will not come because his current work load prevents him from doing so. Senior Israeli officials were informed of the PLO official's decision.

Last night, Sha'th met with several members of the Palestinian Authority. A Qol Yisra'el reporter says they discussed Sha'th's talks with Deputy Chief of Staff Amnon Shahaq on early empowerment and preparations for the upcoming visit of Yasir 'Arafat. General Shahaq and Nabil Sha'th are to resume negotiations next Monday.

Speaking to reporters in Jericho last night, Sha'th outlined the main items on the agenda:

[Begin Sha'th recording] First item on the negotiations will be the continued release of the prisoners and those prisoners who are here in Jericho, and the second item, of course, will be the immediate negotiations on early empowerment of the full spread of the Palestinian Authority and Palestinian police in the West Bank, and then, of course, also continuing to finish the unfinished matters from the Gaza and Jericho. [end recording]

Sha'th also explained why he had come to Jericho at this stage:

[Begin Sha'th recording] I want to make sure that Jericho has all the help and support and protection that Gaza now has from its Palestinian police and Palestinian Authority, but also I am very happy to be here. I have not been here since 1948. [end recording]

Sha'th on Saudi Pressure on Jerusalem, 'Arafat Visit

TA2006185094 Jerusalem Israel Television Channel 1 Network in Hebrew 1800 GMT 20 Jun 94

[Telephone interview with Dr. Nabil Sha'th, 'Arafat's political, adviser, in Gaza, by Ya'aqov Ahime'ir from the weekly "Popolitiqa" talk show—live, in English]

[Excerpts] [Ahime'ir] In a few years you will learn to read the Hebrew press, the Hebrew newspapers in Israel, but maybe you saw the headline of the newspaper YEDI'OT AHARONOT speaking about Saudi pressure on 'Arafat. The item says that 'Arafat will have no control over the holy places, the sacred placed in Jerusalem. What is your reaction to this news?

[Sha'th] No, I really have no evidence at all that there is Saudi pressure on us to do anything. The Saudis are gradually building up their support for us. You know, after the Gulf war there was a period of strained relations and now they have come back to be supporters, and really increasing to a great extent and improving their relations with us.

[Ahime'ir] I see. Do they assist you financially?

[Sha'th] Yes, in the last Paris meeting they gave us $10 million for the urgent recurrent expenses and they have already raised their level of contribution to $62 million for this year.

[Ahime'ir] Dr. Sha'th, do you think that all the Arabs, all the Muslims in the Muslim, world agree that 'Arafat will have control on the holy places in Jerusalem, Christian and Islamic sites in Jerusalem?

[Sha'th] The Christian and Islamic sites in Jerusalem are, of course, important for all Muslims and Christians in the world. But, once there is going to be a Palestinian responsibility in East Jerusalem, that responsibility should and will include protection of these holy sites. During the years, 1,000 years or more of Muslim control of these areas, both Christian and Muslim sites were protected by whoever ruled Jerusalem.

[Ahime'ir] And not necessarily by 'Arafat or by the PLO.

[Sha'th] Well, the PLO will have control of East Jerusalem only when, after the permanent negotiations, it will be agreed to do so. If as a result of the permanent negotiations there will be an independent Palestinian state and East Jerusalem its capital, then he will have full control. But this is now awaiting the permanent settlement. [passage omitted]

[Ahime'ir] Mr. Sha'th, when will Chairman 'Arafat arrive in Jericho or in Gaza?

[Sha'th] This is one of those difficult things to predict. He has kept it up till now a secret. I really don't know. I think he probably, I am sure, will tell us a few days before his arrival so that everybody will prepare. But, up till now he has not given that signal.

[Ahime'ir] Do you think that he will come to Jericho or to Gaza this month?

[Sha'th] I had been predicting so. In fact, I have been telling people that, but this might not happen. It all depends on his schedule.

[Ahime'ir] My last question: When do you personally expect to visit Jerusalem?

[Sha'th] Well, I want to come to Jerusalem as soon as possible. I don't want my coming to Jerusalem to be a problem to anybody. This visit is of a highly personal nature. I think Jerusalem is the most beautiful city in the world and I would like to come and see it again. I have not been in Jerusalem since 1948 actually, and I have so many friends to visit. I would like to go to the al-Aqsa Mosque, but I'll do it in due course. [passage omitted]

Sha'th Views 'Israeli Violations,' Jerusalem Visit

NC2106084294 Cairo Voice of the Arabs in Arabic 0510 GMT 21 Jun 94

[Telephone interview with Dr. Nabil Sha'th, "official in charge of planning and international cooperation in the Palestinian National Authority Council", in Gaza; by Ashraf 'Abd-al-'Aziz, in Cairo; date not given; from the "Dialogue From Afar" program—recorded]

[Text] ['Abd-al-'Aziz] What are the real reasons that made you cancel your visit to Jerusalem, which was planned for yesterday?

[Sha'th] Actually, there were two reasons. First, I had to return to Gaza to handle some issues, which would have made my trip to Jerusalem very short and I like to have enough time to see Jerusalem. Also I must add that the mere announcement of my trip to Jerusalem caused an enormous uproar in Israeli rightist circles and maybe in some Israeli Government circles. I was told that there were threats and there would be disturbances if I went to Jerusalem and that this would require my protection by 1,000 Israeli policemen. I do not want to go to Jerusalem under the protection of Israeli policemen and this was another reason for postponing my visit to a later date.

['Abd-al-'Aziz] You had talks in Jericho yesterday with members of the Palestinian side. What happened in these talks?

[Sha'th] In fact, Jericho City differs from Gaza and this should be noted clearly. In Gaza, the Israeli forces left the greater part of the Gaza Strip, which is populated by one million people who never see an Israeli and are not subjected to any friction with the Israeli authorities. Gaza is rife with security and peace.

As for Jericho, the Israeli authorities are almost besieging the city and a number of roadblocks delay movement between the two parts of Jericho—Jericho and Nizzana. I spent a whole hour forcing the Israeli roadblock to open to let me pass along the main road between Jericho and Nizzana. I traveled by road to

Allenby Bridge to be sure myself of what I had been told. Indeed, I became certain that the Israeli authorities prevent trucks and tourist buses from entering Jericho. This means that 1,200 tourists are barred from Jericho every day, which actually means an economic catastrophe for this small city. When they set up roadblocks between Jericho and Nizzana, they bar agricultural goods from entering the market, which also means catastrophe.

The situation in Jericho is very worrying, because the Israeli authorities there are not implementing the agreement we had signed and are implementing it only in Gaza. The aim of my trip to Jericho was to acquaint myself first hand with these problems and to forward my demands to the Israeli leadership and say that things cannot go on like this in Jericho. I also spent the night with the liberated brothers whom the Israeli forces kept in Jericho City wrongly and in violation of the agreement. I visited all places to learn first hand how we can avert these problems so that Jericho can enjoy the same freedom, dignity, and security which Gaza enjoys.

['Abd-al-'Aziz] I have in front of me a statement in which you accuse Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhaq Rabin of committing flagrant violations of the peace accord that he signed with the PLO. How true is this statement?

[Sha'th] Yes, the statement is true and I said that they prevented me from going to Allenby Bridge and Nizzana City which is an inseparable part of the Jericho area. I experienced these violations first-hand. The agreement does not give them the right to set up any roadblocks between Jericho and Nizzana or between Jericho and Allenby Bridge. It does not give them the right to besiege Jericho and prevent the entry of vegetables or tourists to the city, nor the right to an economic (?blockade) and strangulation of the city. There are also other violations; they are behind in the issue of the prisoners, which I have mentioned. They should have released 5,000 by now and there are still about 1,000 who have not been released.

They have withdrawn on time and the Palestinian police forces also entered on time but there are other violations that have to be stopped immediately if we want the peace process to advance and succeed.

['Abd-al-'Aziz] What about Palestinian President Yasir 'Arafat's return to the Palestinian territories?

[Sha'th] There are many considerations governing this and we hope he will be among us soon. But frankly, after visiting Jericho, I join those who advocate the postponement of his arrival until these problems have been resolved. I cannot imagine President 'Arafat facing what I saw with my own eyes in Jericho today. Of course, 'Arafat's trip will not be limited to Gaza and he is bound to go to Jericho. We have to solve these problems, face these Israeli violations, and tell the Israelis that they should rectify the situation. The entire world and the Israelis themselves must see that the situation has been corrected if they want this process to be a success. Once we resolve these problems, I believe that the arrival of brother Abu-'Ammar [Yasir 'Arafat] will be desirable from all aspects.

Israeli Army Temporarily Denies Passage to Sha'th

NC2006115594 Paris AFP in English 1143 GMT 20 June 94

[Text] Jericho, West Bank, June 20 (AFP)—The Israeli army denied passage for a few hours to senior Palestinian official Nabil Sha'th at a checkpoint in the self-rule enclave of Jericho on Monday [20 June].

Sha'th, who carries the portfolio of minister of international cooperation in the new Palestinian Authority, was let through later in the day after he contacted Amnon Shahaq, Israel's deputy chief of staff.

"Someone irresponsible thought of stopping me," Sha'th told reporters after meeting Palestinian security officials and foreign diplomats at police headquarters here.

"This is totally unacceptable to Palestinians and to the (Israeli-Palestinian) agreement.

"They have no right to stop us between Jericho and al-'Awja or between Jericho and the West Bank. This is against the agreement, how can they do that in peace time?"

Sha'th was stopped at a checkpoint on the edge of Jericho, heading for the Arab village of al-'Awja, at the northern edge of the Palestinian self-rule enclave. He returned to the town.

The main road between the checkpoint and al-'Awja is not part of the autonomous territory and crosses a Jewish settlement. However, it is patrolled by joint Israeli and Palestinian forces.

Sha'th echoed a complaint voiced by other Palestinian officials that the Israeli army regularly bars entry to tourist buses.

Around midday, Sha'th headed back from police HQ for al-'Awja and drove through the checkpoint in a convoy headed by an Israeli security van, part of a joint force with two Palestinian security vehicles.

At al-'Awja, the Israeli van pulled up outside the village as Sha'th went in to visit a youth center.

'Arafat Security Aide Says Israel Obstructs Return

PM2006135594 London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT in Arabic 18 Jun 94 p 5

[Unattributed report: "Security Adviser to Palestinian President Tells AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT: Israel Obstructing 'Arafat's Speedy Return to Self-Rule Area"]

[Text] Amman, AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT—A senior PLO official has accused Israel of putting obstacles in the way of President 'Arafat's return to the self-rule area in a fitting manner that preserves the national dignity of the Palestinians and their president.

Mamduh Nawfal, security adviser to President 'Arafat, told AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT over the telephone from his residence in Tunis: The Israelis have been notified of the date set for the Palestinian leadership's return to the homeland. It is the end of the month or the beginning of next month.

But the Israeli side is still refusing to respond to a number of Palestinian requests, first and foremost the evacuation of the Israeli Army from the crossing points to be used by the president's motorcade, not subjecting any of the leaders accompanying him to inspection, and lifting the ban on the completion of the small airfield in Jericho. The second point concerns approving the list of the 1,000 leadership and administration personnel making up the main bulk of the national administration's institutions, and the president's advisers and their offices. As for the third point representing an obstacle, that is that Israeli leaders are refusing to open up the Gaza and Jericho areas to the residents of the occupied West Bank to express their happiness and celebrate the entry of their historic leadership.

Nawfal pointed out that Israel has not changed many of the ways in which it deals with the Palestinians, and there is a delay in implementing the agreements concerning the release of the other prisoners and detainees, alleviating the hardship of residents of the other occupied towns and villages, and reducing the Army's and settlers' close contact with local residents.

Nawfal denied Israeli reports that he has entered the Gaza Strip to prepare a security plan for President 'Arafat's protection during his entry into his homeland. He said: "There are various agencies currently carrying out this task in Gaza and Jericho. When these procedures are completed, in addition to the removal of the Israeli obstacles I mentioned, we will all leave Tunisian territory with the president."

On filling the six seats in the Palestinian Authority Council, Nawfal said: "Consultations have reached their final stages, and all the names of the council's members will be announced 72 hours before the president's and leadership's return to the homeland." Nawfal said that the delay in announcing the full list of the council is not an obstacle to or a cause of the postponement of the Palestinian leadership's return to the self-rule area.

Autonomy Economic Official Arrives in Jericho

TA2106081494 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 0700 GMT 21 Jun 94

[Text] Yasir 'Amr, who will be in charge of the education portfolio in the autonomy authority, crossed into Jericho via the Allenby Bridge this morning. Our correspondent Moti Amir reports that he is the second member of the autonomy authority to arrive in Jericho in the last two days. 'Amr was preceded by Muhammad al-Nashashibi, who will be in charge of economic affairs.

Yasir 'Amr met with General Isma'il al-Hajj, the military commander of the area, and later left for the offices of Sa'ib 'Urayqat who is also a member of the autonomy authority.

Gaza Police Chief Denies Misusing Funds

PM1706154894 London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT in Arabic 17 Jun 94 p 5

[Unattributed report: "Palestinian Police Commander in Gaza Tells AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT: I Have Not Misused Police Funds or Violated 'Arafat Instructions"]

[Text] Tunis, AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT—Major General Nasr Yusuf, commander of the Palestinian police forces in Gaza, has strongly denied what some quarters said recently, namely that he has misused the funds allocated for Palestinian policemen's salaries, and that he has violated the instructions conveyed to him by Palestinian ambassador to Cairo Zuhdi al-Qidrah in this connection.

Maj. Gen. Yusuf, who met in Tunis yesterday with Palestinian President Yasir 'Arafat, who had summoned him to Tunis, stressed to AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT that 'Arafat was keen to pay the policemen their allowances to face the high cost of living and the difficult economic conditions in Gaza and Jericho.

Maj. Gen. Yusuf, who was accompanied to Tunis by his assistant Brigadier Ziyad al-Atrash, added that he submitted to President 'Arafat, with whom he met yesterday separately, a comprehensive assessment of the previous stage and the present security conditions in the National Authority area.

He stressed that "we are going to adopt a new approach for the next stage." He declined to give any details about the nature of this approach.

Maj. Gen. Yusuf expressed his utmost discontent at and regret for the accusations made recently by prominent figures like Faysal al-Husayni and Jamil al-Tarifi with regard to what they termed a "Gaza-Jericho agreement for detainees." He described these claims as "absolutely untrue." He added: "We regret that some of the brothers who participated in all stages of the negotiations, and who have full knowledge of the details, are ignoring this reality and accusing us of concluding agreements with Israel which are not final."

He said that he and Ziyad al-Atrash had not signed a single letter with Israel, and that what some quarters have said is untrue. He said: "We are implementing an agreement, not conducting negotiations. We are liaison committees tasked with implementing an agreement signed by the Palestinian and Israeli leaderships. We are

eager to secure credibility for the leadership by implementing what has been signed."

Maj. Gen. Yusuf stressed that he had not signed any documents regarding detainees, and that the clauses concerning detainees are stipulated in the Palestinian-Israeli agreement signed on 4 May in Cairo. So "we have not signed any agreement on the detainees, nor have we been dragged into any negotiations with Israel in this connection. If that had been the case, we would have asked the leadership to do that. But we are field officers whose work is based on the field implementation of the agreement on the ground."

Concluding his statement, Maj. Gen. Yusuf stressed that he is going to return to his work in Gaza and Jericho in the next two days, refuting the rumors circulating in Tunis to the effect that 'Arafat is going to replace the police forces commander.

Yusuf Orders Watch on Jericho Security Official

PM2006131694 London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT in Arabic 18 Jun 94 pp 1, 4

[Unattributed report: "Palestinian Police Commander Tells AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT: I Requested Watch on Official in Charge of Preventive Security in Jericho"]

[Excerpt] Tunis, AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT—Major General Nasr Yusuf, commander of the Palestinian police in the self-rule area, has confirmed that he has asked Hajj Isma'il Jabr, police commander in the Jericho area, to watch the actions of Jibril al-Rujub, official in charge of preventive security in the city, and to verify the information received by him about Jibril al-Rujub.

However, in a statement to AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT, he denied ordering the arrest of al-Rujub, and pointed out that reports of excesses committed by him are being investigated. [passage omitted]

PLO Receives 20 Vehicles From Qatar for Police

JN1906102394 Amman SAWT AL-SHA'B in Arabic 19 Jun 94 p 24

[Text] Amman—The PLO has received 20 vehicles as a gift from the State of Qatar to the self-rule authority.

Informed Palestinian sources in Amman have said that the customs transactions of these vehicles have been completed at the Jordanian Customs Department. These vehicles will be shipped to the autonomous areas to be used by the Palestinian police force.

UK Embassy in Cairo To Deliver Equipment to Police

NC1906141994 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1300 GMT 19 Jun 94

[Text] Cairo, 19 Jun (MENA)—The British Embassy in Cairo will hand over equipment valued at over one-half million [Egyptian] pounds to the Palestinian police tomorrow. Designed to be used in Gaza and Jericho, the equipment will be delivered to the Egyptian town of Rafah.

A statement by the embassy today said that the equipment is part of the assistance program of 105 million dollars, about 250 million Egyptian pounds, which, during his visit to Gaza early this year, Foreign Secretary Douglas Hurd promised to the Palestinians over a three-year period.

The statement said that Britain will also contribute 20 percent of the 50 million Sterling pounds, 250 million Egyptian pounds, earmarked by the European Union for development projects.

Demonstration Held Near Gaza Jewish Settlement

TA1906181694 Jerusalem Israel Television Channel 1 Network in Hebrew 1700 GMT 19 Jun 94

[Text] Palestinians today demonstrated near the settlement of Netzarim in the Gaza Strip. Sami Abu-Samahdanah and a Fatah Hawks group, including the Abu-Sittah brothers who are suspected of having murdered settler Uri Megidish at the time, today blocked off the Netzarim junction and did not allow settlers' vehicles to cross through. Our correspondent Shlomi Eldar reports that Abu-Samahdanah organized the demonstration in protest against fire which he claimed was directed at him from Netzarim last night. He asked for the Palestinian police's intervention and filed a complaint with the Israeli-Palestinian liaison office. The demonstrators reopened the junction only after a senior Palestinian police officer promised he would take action to safeguard Palestinians moving near Jewish settlements. The Netzarim settlers and the IDF [Israel Defense Forces] spokesman deny that shots were fired from Netzarim yesterday.

Police Arrest PLO Dissidents for Settler's Murder

NC2106110194 Paris AFP in English 1014 GMT 21 Jun 94

[Text] Gaza City, Gaza Strip, June 21 (AFP)—The Palestinian police have arrested four PLO guerrillas, two on charges of killing a Jewish settler last year, according to a group of dissident fighters.

Two cousins, 'Amr and Raja' Abu-Sittah, are accused by Israel of murdering a Gaza settler on March 8, 1993.

"We appeal to the Palestinian authority to release those who our enemies want to kill," said the Abu-al-Rish group, named in memory of a guerrilla killed by the Israelis after he laid down his weapons for autonomy.

The small group is made up of fighters from the Hawks of Fatah, the mainstream PLO movement, who decided to pursue the armed struggle.

"Even though none of our men has carried out any acts or crimes against the peace process, the Palestinian police has arrested 'Amr and Raja' Abu-Sitta without reason, as well as 'Ali Al-Dali et 'Abda-al-Salam Al-Qasaf," the group said in a statement.

"It is a crime to arrest any one who gave his life for the homeland, who resisted occupation with all his strength. We demand their release."

The Abu-Sittas enlisted in the new police force in May but walked out before the end of the month claiming they were not protected against Israeli agents who wanted to kill them.

Prisoners in Israeli Jails Declare Hunger Strike

TA2006165194 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 1505 GMT 20 Jun 94

[Excerpts] Some 6,000 Palestinian prisoners serving sentences in Israeli prisons and IDF [Israel Defense Forces] lock-up facilities have declared a hunger strike starting tomorrow and until further notice to protest the fact that they are not being released from jail. The leaders of the prisoners called on the inhabitants of the territories to boycott the celebrations for Yasir 'Arafat's arrival and to hoist black flags on the day of his visit in solidarity with the prisoners. Our correspondent Moti Amir reports:

[Begin Amir recording] The Palestinian prisoners decided to overtly fight the Israeli decision not to release them from jail and to protest the way Palestinian leaders have been dealing with their case. The leaders of the prisoners announced through the Palestinian Prisoner Club in Bethlehem that all the prisoners will go on a hunger strike tomorrow and called on the inhabitants of the territories to help them in their struggle. 'Isa Karaki, head of the club, said the relatives of the prisoners will stage a demonstration outside the gates of the al-Aqsa camp in Jericho this coming Friday in solidarity with the prisoners. He added that the prisoners, including Fatah members, called on the inhabitants of the territories not to take part in the celebrations the day of 'Arafat's visit to Jericho, which may take place on 2 July. [passage omitted]

It should be noted that at least 1,300 Palestinian prisoners were given the choice to get out of prison by virtue of the Gaza-Jericho agreement, but they refused to sign a declaration that they recognize the agreement and undertake not to use violence against the peace process. [end recording]

PLO Envoy Welcomes Progress on Jordanian Track

JN2006123894 Amman Radio Jordan in English 1100 GMT 20 Jun 94

[Text] Palestine Ambassador to Jordan al-Tayyib 'Abd-al-Rahim, who is minister of presidential affairs in the Palestinian National Authority, has welcomed the progress achieved so far on the Jordanian track in the peace process. He said what was achieved represents a Jordanian accomplishment and commitment to what had been agreed upon between Arab parties involved in the peace process. Mr. 'Abd-al-Rahim denied that negotiation on each track would lead to isolating one Arab party and leave Israel capable of imposing its conditions on it. He said such reasoning is not correct because there are constants and each Arab side seeks just and comprehensive peace. He added: No final peace treaties before each track solves issues related to it. He said what has been achieved on the Jordanian track supports the Palestinian track, stressing accumulative achievements on each track constitute support for the other tracks.

Mr. 'Abd-al-Rahim explained that achieving progress on the Jordanian track would generate further breakthroughs on the Palestinian track and would push the Syrian and Lebanese track forward. The Palestinian official said the progress on the Jordanian track spurred underway international efforts for scoring progress on the Syrian and Lebanese tracks. He paid tribute to Jordan's support of the Palestinian side in the field of deepening the Palestinian track and crystallizing the Palestinian identity.

Saudis Said To Warn 'Arafat Against Jerusalem Visit

TA2006105994 Tel Aviv YEDI'OT AHARONOT in Hebrew 20 Jun 94 pp 1, 19

[Report by Shim'on Schiffer and Dani Shaqed]

[Excerpt] The Saudi authorities have clarified to Yasir 'Arafat in no uncertain terms that the Muslim holy sites in Jerusalem are not the PLO's property but that of the entire Arab nation, with Saudi Arabia as its center.

This is the reason 'Arafat is delaying his arrival in Jericho, as prior to the Saudis' issuing their warning, 'Arafat had stated on several occasions that after visiting Jericho, he would undertake a prayer pilgrimage to the Muslim holy sites on the Temple Mount.

This declaration alarmed the Saudi authorities, who feared that 'Arafat would try to create "facts on the ground," and consequently they decided to put him in his place. [passage omitted]

Hamas Assails Israeli 'Agreements' With PLO, Jordan

JN2006193994 Paris Radio Monte Carlo in Arabic 1900 GMT 20 Jun 94

[Text] Ibrahim Ghawshah, spokesman for the Islamic Resistance Movement, Hamas, reiterated in Damascus today his objection to the agreements signed recently between Israel and the Palestinians and between Israel and Jordan. He said: We reject the defeatist policy that began in Madrid, Oslo, and Cairo and ended now in Amman, because these policies aim at relinquishing the rights and lands of the Palestinian people.

Ghawshah made this statement before the meeting of the 10 Palestinian factions that oppose the self-rule agreement. Palestinian sources said the conferees will discuss in this meeting the situation in the self-rule territories and in all territories still under occupation.

Radio, TV To Begin Experimental Transmission 1 Jul

JN2106103394 Amman AL-RA'Y in Arabic 21 Jun 94 p 23

[Text] Gaza, QUDS PRESS—A Palestinian media official has said Palestinian radio and television will begin experimental transmissions on the first of July. The radio will temporarily transmit six to eight hours daily [illegible]elevision about four hours daily.

Engineer Hisham Makki, general coordinator of radio and television in the Gaza Strip, said Palestinian President Yasir 'Arafat has agreed to a request by Radwan Abu-'Ayyash, official in charge of the radio and television corporation, to use the Palestinian police building as a temporary office for the corporation. He added that one temporary studio for radio transmissions and another for the production of light television programs are being built in coordination with the Jericho municipality.

He said Abu-'Ayyash has received donations from Arab and foreign countries in the form of equipment and funds. Germany, he said, offered to build a small studio and to pay the salaries of 15-30 persons working in it for one year.

In a statement to QUDS PRESS, Makki, who had earlier worked for television stations in Jordan, Abu Dhabi, and Morocco, said experimental transmissions will begin on 1 July. He added that a questionnaire has been distributed amor.g the citizens in the occupied Arab territories to determine transmission times suitable for them.

He said work at the radio and television corporation will be governed by the need to safeguard principles, ethics, religion, and the Islamic creed. He added: The television will be the property of all the Palestinian people, as well as their mirror. It will not belong to any party and will be open for participation by all qualified and experienced parties. He said cultural, social, and political programs, as well as family programs and everything that pertains to the Palestinian affairs will be presented.

Makki said he intends to prepare a program called "The Vigil Eye" to be presented by the public relations and moral guidance department of the Palestinian national security forces. The program will deal with police news and include reportage on their work as well as interviews. It will also deal with the conditions of prisoners.

He emphasized that Palestinian television, in cooperation with the second channel of the French television, will cover the special occasion of PLO Chairman Yasir 'Arafat's arrival in the self-rule areas, under the name of the Palestinian Radio and Television Corporation.

First Palestinian Bank To Operate in Ramallah

TA2006152494 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 1400 GMT 20 Jun 94

[Text] The Bank of Israel has granted permission for the first Palestinian bank to operate in Ramallah. Our economic affairs correspondent Menahem Friedman reports that it will be called The Commercial Bank of Palestine, and will join the four other banks—two Jordanian and two Israeli—operating in the territories.

Bank of Jordan Chairman Opens Branch in Nabulus

TA1806083694 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 0800 GMT 18 Jun 94

[Text] This morning, the chairman of the Jordanian state bank board of directors attended the opening ceremony of the bank's Nabulus branch, which came in the footsteps of the first branch opened in Ramallah some time ago. Our correspondent Moti Amir reports that the Bank of Jordan's [preceding three words in English] Nabulus branch employs 40 people, and it will trade in shekels, dinars, and foreign currency, under Bank of Israel supervision for the time being.

Algeria

Antidialogue 'Trio' Plans To Topple Sifi Government

PM2006104494 London AL-HAYAH in Arabic 17 Jun 94 p4

[Unattributed report: "Algeria: Tripartite Committee To Topple Sifi's Government"]

[Text] Algeria—Reliable Algerian sources have told AL-HAYAH that the group of Boubakr Belkaid (former interior minister), Selim Saadi (former interior minister), and General Mohamed Touati (adviser to the defense minister and member of the Dialogue Committee) has been making intensive contacts for weeks with the Algerian opposition parties, and circles of political movements and societies in Tunisia, Morocco, and France to undermine Mokdad Sifi's government, accusing it of "political impotence against the Islamic Salvation Front [FIS], economic failure against a background of deteriorating social conditions, and failure to take a firm stand against terrorism."

That group, the sources said, offers itself as an alternative "to the current political line and is preparing to topple the present government." They quoted people close to Sifi's government as saying that "behind that move, there are judicial files against Selim Saadi who formed a number of companies in Tunisia in the names of his relatives when he was agriculture minister and then interior minister, as well as large files against Boubakr Belkaid and one of his in-laws since Boukaid was construction minister, then higher education minister, then information minister, and finally interior minister." They added that it is not unlikely that "the political activities of the trio opposed to dialogue and reconciliation with the Islamists are just a reaction to protect their political and financial interests."

The sources believe that these figures "are trying to use the card of [the anniversary of] the late President Mohamed Boudiaf (former chairman of the Higher State Council) to support Saeed Saadi, leader of the Rally for Culture and Democracy, in a move to stage a procession on 29 June despite Saadi's denial that he was exploiting Boudiaf's assassination anniversary to stage the procession."

Media sources in Algeria say that Selim Saadi, interior minister under Redha Malek, "had seen himself as the successor to Ali Kafi (Higher State Council chairman) because of the support he was and still is getting from his ally Gen. Mohamed Touati and his group. That was clearly evident in the meetings Saadi held with local officials in Algerian provinces. It was noticed then that he was speaking not in his capacity as interior minister but rather more like a head of state, a matter which created extreme sensitivity between him and Ali Kafi and then between him and the current President Liamine Zeroual who dismissed Redha Malek's government because of the attitude of Saadi who exceeded his limits to the point of speaking on behalf of the military establishment."

While the "trio" is planning to topple the government, the latter is proceeding with its plan to define its policies, solve new problems such as those related to the official certificate examinations, and introduce central administrative changes at Algiers University and some institutes.

Foreign Minister Meets Christopher in Washington

LD2106092294 Algiers Radio Algiers Network in Arabic 0900 GMT 21 Jun 94

[Text] Foreign Minister Mohamed Salah Dembri yesterday met U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher in Washington. Dembri—who arrived yesterday in Washington on a working visit to the United States of America—discussed with his American counterpart several issues, including the political situation in Algeria and other international issues.

Dembri Comments on National, Regional Issues

PM2106095494 London AL-HAYAH in Arabic 18 Jun 94 pp1, 4

[Interview with Foreign Minister Mohamed Salah Dembri by Rashid Khashanah in Tunis; date not given]

[Text] [Khashanah] With the completion of the formation of the Transitional National Council [TNC], is it to be hoped that the democratic process will be revived?

[Dembri] We have undertaken to implement the resolutions of last January's national conference. We have indeed concentrated on the transitional institutions. The political dialogue is still in progress with an open mind and with all parties including those who have so far refused to participate (in the institutions). We are very hopeful that the circle of accord will be enlarged in the coming months.

I should remind you here that the election process has been programmed for three years from now, but we would revive it even earlier if the circumstances allowed that.

[Khashanah] There is an urgent U.S. call for dialogue with the Islamic Salvation Front [FIS] and for giving it a share in government. What do you say to that?

[Dembri] We say that Algeria needs all its sons without exception. When we declare that we are for an open dialogue, that means that we do not exclude any political group or political figure if they accept the fundamental conditions, especially the republican regime, respect for the opposite opinion, partisan plurality, respect for the Algerian people's components and sanctities, and renunciation of violence as a means of gaining power or

remaining in power. I believe that these conditions should be accepted by those who enter into a dialogue with us.

[Khashanah] The gap between the U.S. and French positions is now common knowledge. How do you in Algeria view the two positions, especially the U.S. call for FIS participation in the government?

[Dembri] We are now in a transitional stage paving the way for the resumption of the election process. After that it will be the people who will freely decide who is to the represent them in the future. The government's role is to organize this transitional period.

As regards the dialogue, it is an open dialogue and it covers the horizons of the new Algerian society based on the rule of law, politial plurality, and respect for the components of the Algerian character. That is important because we in Algeria are Muslim Arabs. These are basic facts which nobody has a right to (claim to) monopolize in the political arena, because they apply to all the Algerians.

It seems to me that there are numerous ways of loving Algeria but there is only one Algeria which should be united and uniting.

[Khashanah] Should we expect an early release of FIS leaders as a step to build trust and pave the way for national reconciliation?

[Dembri] In a democracy, everything is possible.

[Khashanah] In the government's view, what are the possible grounds for reconciliation?

[Dembri] There are the resolutions issued by the national conference. They have now been submitted to the [TNC]....

[Khashanah] But some major forces such as the Liberation Front [FLN], the Socialist Forces Front [SFF], and the FIS have boycotted the conference, so how could the latter's resolutions form common grounds?

[Dembri] The political forces you have mentioned did not reject the national conference resolutions, they wanted to add more points. How could they reject a republican regime, for instance? Nobody rejects that. And how could they object to political plurality, respect for the opposite opinion, and the rule of law?

[Khashanah] The government recently announced that it had destroyed Saeed Mekhlouf's group and dealt a blow to the fundamentalist groups. Does this mean that the regular forces have regained the initiative?

[Dembri] I am not acquainted with the security situation.

[Khashanah] How do you interpret the emphatic U.S. call for a dialogue with FIS and the emphatic French rejection of such a dialogue?

[Dembri] There are differences of opinion but we Algerians see ourselves as an Islamic Arab society and at the same time we adopt all the rules of the modern political game including respect for the law, individual and collective freedoms, and human rights.

Algerian society should now discuss everything that would contribute to its renaissance and chart its future dimensions. We do not need a classification of the Algerian society that is done abroad. I believe that Algerian political groups are intelligent enough and able enough to discuss their own affairs without foreign interference.

[Khashanah] Do you not believe that the economic agreements, especially the agreement with the "Paris Club" to reschedule public debts, would help reduce the deficit and calm the internal situation?

[Dembri] After our agreement with the IMF and the recent agreement with the Paris Club and the rescheduling of debts, we initiated separate bilateral negotiations with each donor state. The problem we Algerians are facing in this connection is whether our handling of this file should be political or strictly technical. The volume of [trade] exchanges between Algeria and the industrial states confirms clearly that there is an imbalance there and we have been losing since independence and to this day.

Between the years 1969 and 1989, that is in 20 years, Algeria got from the Western world $1.5 billion net but we paid the Western states in the same period $2.5-3 billion annually, or $50 to $60 billion over 20 years. So we ask: Which side contributed to the other's development, Algeria or the industrial states? I believe that the third world contributed to the development of the Western countries.

[Khashanah] The Moroccan press has been criticizing Algeria's position on the Sahara. Has there been any change in the Algerian Government's handling of that file?

[Dembri] There is a peace plan drawn up by the United Nations for the settlement of the Sahara problem. It has been decided to hold a free and impartial self-determination referendum as soon as possible. The UN peace plan is actually derived from the OAU's plan.

We should now tackle the issues which precede the referendum and pave the way for its success such as the terms for the definition of identity, the number of voters, the provision of guarantees after the referendum, and the way of organizing the election campaign. There are many issues on which understanding is expected to be reached in direct talks between Morocco and the Polisario, the two parties to the conflict. Algeria's position is one favoring success of that plan but if, during the talks, a possibility emerged of an agreed political solution between the two parties to the conflict, then that would be up to them before anyone else. That would then require political intelligence from all parties.

[Khashanah] Will Algerian-Moroccan relations improve after the coolness that has recently characterized them?

[Dembri] We do not judge relations by press campaigns which have no solid basis. Morocco is dear to us. Morocco, Algeria, Tunisia, Libya, and Mauritania have a role to play to strengthen our presence in this world. That is the main aim. The rest is secondary.

There is much room for fruitful cooperation and integration between us. Algeria is working on building a pipeline that crosses Moroccan territory. Morocco will get a share equal to 30 percent of the gas carried through it to Europe. That proves Algeria's goodwill.

[Khashanah] What is Algeria doing to reactivate the Arab Maghreb Union [AMU], having assumed its chairmanship?

[Dembri] There is an extensive plan of action. Everyone appears to want to launch the Maghreb train. We have seen over the past years that the political will is ahead of the bureaucratic executive organs. If we review the results of the six summit conferences since the formation of the AMU, we would find that the leaders approved 30 agreements but only five of these agreements have entered the phase of implementation. That does not indicate a rejection of the march toward integration but it does indicate the existence of a gap and the reason for it is that the political will is ahead of bureaucratic practice, and that must be remedied.

[Khashanah] President Zeroual recently sent envoys to the Gulf states. Their arrival there coincided with the escalation of the war in Yemen. What did the envoys carry?

[Dembri] We always have talks with the Arab brothers on matters of common interest. On Arab and Islamic causes, Algeria is always eager to be at the forefront of the states searching for solutions and expressing absolute solidarity with its brothers.

There is a tragedy in Yemen and it should be tackled in the appropriate manner, which is consultation and coordination with all parties. If the Arabs cannot put their own house in order, what is left for us in this world?

[Khashanah] There was talk earlier of an Algerian initiative on behalf of the AMU to stop the war in Yemen. Is that still on?

[Dembri] Yes, it is still on but we have asked the brothers in Yemen to stop the fighting before anything else. The Yemeni brothers could then find solutions with their intelligence and wisdom.

[Khashanah] What is Algeria's position regarding the declaration of the "Democratic Republic of Yemen"?

[Dembri] Yes, there was such a declaration but will it end the fighting and will the Yemeni people accept a continuation of the battles? We first of all call for a cease-fire to spare the Yemeni people's blood and then we can look for solutions. That is Algeria's position.

Minister on Plans for $17 Billion Oil, Gas Project

LD2106082594 Algiers Radio Algiers Network in Arabic 0600 GMT 21 Jun 94

[Text] Rescheduling Algeria's foreign debts will relieve the burden on the oil and gas sectors, particularly as Algeria has a plan under implementation. This is what Amar Mekhloufi, minister of industry and energy said in an interview with the London-based AL-HAYAT newspaper.

The minister announced that this plan would be carried out in the next five years and was estimated to cost about $17 billion, 50 percent of which would be in foreign currency.

The minister added that the plan would have good production and export results and would enable Algeria to repay its debts in the future.

Religious Affairs Minister Delivers 'Ashura Sermon

LD2106101894 Algiers ENTV Television Network in Arabic 1918 GMT 20 Jun 94

[Sermon by Minister of Religious Affairs Sassi Lamouri in Algiers on 20 June—recorded]

[Excerpts] I beseech God's refuge from the curses of the damned satan. In the name of God, the merciful, the compassionate. May God's prayers and peace be upon the noblest of prophets, his family, companions and followers until the day of judgement.

I would like to salute the whole Algerian people on the occasion of this blessed day, which falls at the beginning of the new Hegira year 1415. I wish that new Hegira year will be a generous year; a year of blessing, concord, unity, compassion between members of this great people. [passage omitted]

The prophet, may God's prayers and peace be upon him, showed so much compassion to people. And that is why the message of Islam is one of compassion. The proof of that is the fact that the holy Koran's suras, and there are 114 of them, all begin all with the phrase: In the name of God, the merciful, the compassionate. This is a good indication for all wise men that the essence of this religion is compassion between humans. All godly religions were meant for sowing the seeds of compassion and peace between people, however.

We are facing in Algeria the most difficult period in our history. We are facing a period that requires us to exert united efforts, forget about grudges and rancor, and extend hands to each other so as to bring about unity, close our ranks, and bolster fraternity which Islam has called for. [passage omitted]

I am speaking in my capacity as religious affairs' minister. I have a duty toward my religion and my dear homeland which will make me proud the day I see it enjoying security and stability. I will raise my head high the day I see my country enjoying unity and closed ranks. It is my duty as a man of religion and a minister for religious affairs to say the words of truth. [passage omitted]

The Algerian nation is going through one of the most difficult periods. The wise men in it must endeavor to do good and call the unjust people by their names because injustice is a sin. [passage omitted]

People, being misled from overseas and other places, come to kill families and slaughter children while the people and the nation are keeping silent. This is unacceptable from a religious point of view. It is unacceptable from a religious point view that families and children are slaughtered while the nation is keeping silent. This is injustice. This is injustice. [passage omitted]

Therefore, there is probably a deception in what we are witnessing in the country. There is deception in the name of religion. I am telling you that had the prophet been revived, he would have disclaimed these acts. [passage omitted]

Muhammad, may God's Peace be upon him, did not shed any blood nor did he kill anybody, on the contrary he was compassionate. [passage omitted]

This proves than Islam is a religion of compassion and a religion of brotherhood; therefore if there is any deception in the name of religion Islam is innocent of it. Even those who claim that they speak in the name of religion or in the name of democracy or any other slogan are mistaken. [passage omitted]

Wise men stand in closed ranks and put an end to bloodshed and put an end to this raging fire which might spread everywhere. [Passage omitted]

Therefore, the Islamic religion clears itself from killing and bloodshed. Islam brought with it compassion, brotherhood, love, unity, and closing ranks. This is Islam. This is Islam.

This [present situation] could merely be a passing cloud. But woe unto those who have betrayed their country. Woe unto people who have betrayed their country. Nothing will last forever. This is merely a summer cloud that will pass soon.

Thanks be to God the ship is nearly arriving safely at its destination. The ship is nearly at a safe harbor. Today's events will be a thing of the past. And one must say the truth in these very harsh circumstances because any nation which does not stand for the truth will have no history. And it is, therefore, the responsibility of the people as the prophet said: You are all responsible; everyone of you ought to shoulder the burden of its responsibilities. Hence, everyone of us ought to shoulder his responsibility. Those who have gone astray should return to the righteous path, accept to live with this society and lay down their arms.

To take up arms against the sons of your nation is a crime which will never be forgiven. Taking to arms is an unforgivable crime. Even if we punish those people in accordance with the shari'ah, the shari'ah has ruled: This is the recompense of those who fight against God and His messenger, and hasten about the earth, to do corruption there: They will be slaughtered, or crucified, or their hands and feet will alternately be struck off, or they will be banished from the land. That is a degradation for them in this world; and in the world to come awaits them a mighty chastisement.

This is [the punishment] for those who have taken to arms, broken with community, are harming the unity of the nation, and terrorize its members.

Do we have to make people cry every day? Do we have to terrorize families everyday? Do we have to make children, women, elderly, and poor people die with fear and terror? Why? Why all this? Is not there among you someone who is wise enough?

I am aware that there are people who can help to stop this bloodshed; but they have so far been very mean. However, it is their duty to make an effort and put the fire out. It is their duty to put the fire out. Algeria is for everyone. No one should be worried about the state of Islam in Algeria. Islam in Algeria is doing fine. [passage omitted]

I speak the truth and we should not be reluctant to assume our responsibilities. [passage omitted] The people are responsible and the Prophet holds you responsible. We are celebrating the religious festival of 'Ashura, and I wish that this day will make tomorrow the last day of misfortunes in Algeria's history. I say to those who have gone astray and have erred: Lay down your arms, lay down your arms and live in society a happy and good life. Islam prohibits this and prohibits killings. Let me say this for the record: Islam is against the shedding of blood.

I say this and I ask God's forgiveness for you and myself, for God is much-forgiving and compassionate. May God's peace and blessings be upon you.

Egypt

Northern Yemen's Rashid Meets With Musa

NC2006204894 Cairo Arab Republic of Egypt Radio Network in Arabic 2000 GMT 20 Jun 94

[Text] This evening Foreign Minister 'Amr Musa met with a Yemeni delegation from Sanaa led by 'Ali Mansur Rashid, member of the General Committee of the General People's Congress. Rashid said that they discussed the developments in Yemen. He praised the efforts being made by Egypt and President Husni Mubarak to stop the bloodshed in Yemen and to reach a cease-fire.

On the failure of the UN envoy's mission, Rashid said that the UN envoy had made good efforts and put forward certain proposals. Rashid noted that had they been adopted by the United Nations and the rest of the Arab countries, they would have helped to stop the bloodshed in Yemen and bring about a cease-fire. He said that he and the UN envoy discussed quick ways to form a military committee, which previously supervised the armed forces' movements. He said they also discussed expanding the committee by adding certain Arab parties to it.

Rashid noted that the fighting in Yemen hinges on the continuation of the rebellion against the constitutional legitimacy, this group's submission to the legitimacy, and ending the rebellion. He said: Despite this, we are ready for a cease-fire and will contribute to forming a committee to monitor it.

Responding to a question that unity cannot be imposed by force, Rashid said that the unity was not imposed by force, but was established peacefully and democratically, and two referendums were held on the unity. He pointed out that what is now taking place in Yemen is an attempt to impose secession by force and we are defending and safeguarding this unity. He said that he asked 'Amr Musa for Egypt to continue its important and good role in limiting the Yemeni people's suffering and pain.

Northern Yemen Envoy on Cease-Fire, U.S. Statement

NC2106101294 Cairo MENA in Arabic 0920 GMT 21 Jun 94

[Text] Cairo, 21 Jun (MENA)—Following his meeting with President Mubarak today, Yemeni Presidential Council Member 'Abd-al-'Aziz 'Abd-al-Ghani expressed his pleasure, noting that he had conveyed a message to President Mubarak from Lieutenant General 'Ali 'Abdallah Salih on the present situation in Yemen and bilateral ties, which he described as strong and solid.

The Yemeni official hoped the Yemeni problems would remain among the Yemenis alone. If foreign intervention stops, we will be better able to solve the Yemeni problems through dialogue, he said, noting that there was a dialogue for nine months before military operations broke out.

He added that the Yemeni Government is prepared to continue that dialogue and stop all military operations, provided that the other side stops and abides by the cease-fire.

'Abd-al-Ghani pointed out that the Yemeni Government has repeatedly announced a cease-fire, but the other side has always violated it and not respected it. He reiterated his country's compliance with the UN Security Council resolution, affirming that they are doing their utmost to facilitate the mission of the UN Secretary General's envoy, Lakhdar Brahimi. He added that his government has voiced its readiness to cooperate with all the parties in stopping the fighting in the Republic of Yemen and its readiness to sit with the other side in any place in the Republic of Yemen to resolve the present situation peacefully.

Asked to comment on the recent U.S. statement on the situation in Yemen, he said: We have always abided by the cease-fire and are prepared to stop fighting immediately if the other side complies. We are also prepared to sit at the negotiating table within the framework of legitimacy and the Republic of Yemen, he added.

Responding to a question on north Yemen's position on the presence of UN observers, the Yemeni president's envoy said that the UN Security Council resolution does not provide for the presence of international observers. He said: To spare the blood of the Yemeni people, we suggested to the UN secretary general's envoy the enhancement of the role of the Military Committee that was formed by Yemenis in the past, and which included the Sultanate of Oman, Jordan, and the U.S. and French military attaches in Sanaa. We are willing to expand this committee in order to work for a cease-fire through it. That committee, which is actually in existence, can monitor the suspension of military operations until a cease-fire is enforced, he said.

'Abd-al-'Aziz 'Abd-al-Ghani thanked President Mubarak and big sister Egypt for its constant efforts to stop the loss of Arab blood and for its eagerness to establish peace and stability in Yemen and the entire Arab region.

Asked whether it is possible to hold a referendum on unity in south Yemen, the presidential envoy said that unity was established by popular decision and that such a referendum was conducted under the umbrella of the multiparty system and political pluralism. Noting that the results of the referendum reflected support for unity by an overwhelming majority, he said that "the secessionists are a few who do not represent Yemen and want to impose secession by force."

The Yemeni envoy added that it is up to the Yemeni people to decide. Had the Yemeni people not protected unity, it would not have existed in its present form, as represented by the legitimate forces' control over most of the country. He emphasized that these forces are capable of silencing "the rebels" wherever they might be and settling the matter militarily if they want. "But they do not want to shed more blood," he said.

In an implicit reference to Aden, 'Abd-al-Ghani accused the other side of striking at vital installations and petroleum establishments. The last thing they did was bombard the trade center in Mocha and the adjacent city, which led to the martyrdom of 17 persons and the injury of more than 30 persons, he said.

Commenting on President Mubarak's ideas during the meeting that continued for well over two hours, the Yemeni envoy said: President Mubarak put forward valuable and useful ideas that all focused on stopping the

bloodshed and turning to dialogue. I will convey these ideas to President 'Ali 'Abdallah Salih.

Stating that he would convey the message fully to President Salih, 'Abd-al-Ghani expressed his optimism that the ideas President Mubarak put forward would have a positive impact in the future.

We hope all Arab brothers will help us stop fighting and sit at the negotiating table. They can also help us by refraining from interfering politically in the problem, either by Arabizing or internationalizing the issue, he stressed.

Touching on the role of the Arab League, the Yemeni envoy said: We are against subjecting any internal Yemeni affair to discussion at an Arab or international forum, because the League's Constitution does not entitle it to look into the internal affairs of any state. Yemen is a founder of the Arab League and a signatory of its Charter, he said, adding: We have explained that this issue is none of the League's business. We are not belittling the League; we are respecting its Charter, he said, stating that the UN Charter as well does not entitle the organization to look into states' internal affairs.

Leaves Cairo for Damascus

NC2106104294 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1030 GMT 21 Jun 94

[Text] Cairo, 21 Jun (MENA)—'Abd-al-'Aziz 'Abd-al-Ghani, member of North Yemen's Presidential Council, left Cairo for Damascus this morning after a two-day visit to Cairo.

During the visit, he conveyed to President Husni Mubarak a message from Yemeni President 'Ali 'Abdallah Salih on the current situation in the region and bilateral relations.

Prosecution Seeks Death for 5 in al-Alfi Case

NC2006145294 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1409 GMT 20 Jun 94

[Text] Cairo, 20 Jun (MENA)—Today the Military Prosecutor's Office demanded the death penalty for defendants number one to five in the case pertaining to the attempted assassination of Interior Minister Hasan al-Alfi. There are 17 defendants in the case, two of them fugitives. The first five defendants have been named as Muhammad Rashad 'Abd-al-Hamid Hijazi, Muhammad 'Abd-al-'Alim Muhammad Khalifah, Mas'ud al-'Arif Ibrahim, Tariq Ahmad 'Abd-al- Hamid, and Usamah Muhammad Rashad (a fugitive).

The prosecution also demanded stiff penalties for the remaining defendants in the case.

The representative of the Military Prosecutor's Office told the court that the defendants attempted to kill Information Minister Safwat al-Sharif three times, they made two attempts on the life of Interior Minister Hasan al-Alfi, and they tried to assassinate UN Secretary General Dr. Butrus-Ghali.

The prosecution reviewed the facts pertaining to the establishment of the organization to which the defendants belong, the criminal conspiracy they concluded, and the training they undertook in the use of weapons and explosives.

The prosecution said that the defendants received large sums of money from abroad, they provided the banks through which the funds were transferred with false names. They used the money thus received to rent apartments and to purchase vehicles and plots of land on which to build hideouts, weapons, and explosives.

The representative of the Military Prosecutor's Office said that the defendants have been divided into two groups. Defendants number one through nine are in the first group and defendants number ten through seventeen are in the second.

He said the members of the first group were recruited by the terrorists Nazih Nushi Rashid and 'Adil 'Awad Siyam. Rashid was killed during the attack on the interior minister and Siyam was recently killed in a police ambush in Cairo's al-Munib area.

He added that the organization's members purchased a tract of land in Bilbays in al-Sharqiyah Governorate where they built a hideout with cells for holding Egyptian and foreign hostages.

They bought a plot of land on the Suez road to build another hideout. Their hideouts were mainly found in al-Jizah area and Bilbays in al-Sharqiyah Governorate.

The representative of the Military Prosecutor's Office told the court that the defendants gave their own interpretations of some of the Koran's chapters and sayings of the prophet in a way that agreed with their ideology, which is based on murder, accusing the head of state and his aides of apostasy, and seeking to overthrow the government by force. He affirmed that Islamic shari'ah does not approve of their ideology, which advocates murder, bombings, and the killing of innocent men, women, and children.

The prosecutor said that the first terrorist act they carried out was the murder of a dissident member called 'Adil Anwar. They ambushed him in front of his house. After that they planted an explosive device at the al-Jazirah Youth Center in order to kill several police officers during their daily physical training session.

He added that when they tried to kill the interior minister, they rigged a motorcycle with explosives. The explosion caused the death of two members of the organization, Diya' Mahmud Hafiz and Nushi Rashid.

The prosecutor related how they killed Ahmad Yahya, the first witness in the case pertaining to the attempt on the prime minister's life, in a car showroom.

He explained how the defendants stole a Fiat 128 from in front of a church in al-Fajjalah and used it in the murder attack on Ahmad Yahya. Later the terrorist 'Adil 'Awad Siyam was killed in the same car in al-Munib area.

The prosecutor pointed out that the second group of defendants concluded a criminal conspiracy with the first group and provided them with weapons and ammunition for their operations. They also supplied them with cylinders to build explosive devices.

The prosecutor told the court: In this case we are not discussing a particular ideology or putting a system of thought on trial. We are examining concrete facts comprising criminal conspiracy to commit premeditated murders, membership of an illegal group with the aim of carrying out assassinations, and possession of weapons, explosives, and forged documents.

The Military Court adjourned the case until 25 June when the defense counsel will sum up the case.

Committee Offers Proposals for National Congress

NC2006210994 Cairo Arab Republic of Egypt Radio Network in Arabic 1730 GMT 20 Jun 94

[Text] The National Dialogue Preparatory Committee issued a report today listing its proposals and recommendations for the National Dialogue General Congress. Specifying the national, legitimate groups that President Husni Mubarak will invite to attend the congress, the committee recommended inviting representatives of the political parties, the People's Assembly and Consultative Council, professional associations, the General Labor Federation, specialized national councils, the universities, university faculty clubs, the media, writers, research centers, and scientific research institutes; individuals who have won state prizes; women's and popular societies; and people concerned with children's, youth, and sports affairs.

The Preparatory Committee also recommended that representatives of the following groups be invited: student federations, local government councils, chambers of commerce, industrial federations, banks, economists, agricultural cooperatives, and people concerned with family planning and the anti-illiteracy campaign.

It also recommended inviting a group of public figures and cabinet members.

The Preparatory Committee recommended that every political party be represented by four members, one of whom would be the party leader.

Regarding the working method and the organization of the National Dialogue General Congress, the Preparatory Committee recommended that the congress should meet to approve the committee's recommendations and then divide itself into three main committees: the Political Committee, the Social and Cultural Committee, and the Economic Committee. Every congress member would choose the committee he would like to join. He would list this as his first choice, and then another committee as his second.

The National Dialogue Preparatory Committee recommended that every political party should have the right to attend the meetings of any of the three major committees. Every committee would then elect a moderator who would organize the debates and the committee's work.

The Preparatory Committee stated that the moderator of each committee should have the right to summon any official to appear before it in line with the committee's request.

The Preparatory Committee proposed that the National Dialogue General Congress should have an office staff consisting of its Moderator General, appointed by President Husni Mubarak, the elected moderators of the three committees, and three other members to be selected by the president from among the leaders and representatives of the political parties participating in the congress. The office staff would oversee the activities of the congress.

Concerning the issues that the congress will debate, the Preparatory Committee decided that the Political Committee would discuss the revision and amendment of the law pertaining to the exercise of political rights, the fight against extremism and terrorism, and the revision and amendment of the law organizing the powers and responsibilities of the Socialist Prosecutor.

The Preparatory Committee recommended that bills under discussion and the draft general budget should be submitted to the Consultative Council prior to their discussion by the People's Assembly. This would be in line with the recent tendency to give legislative powers to the Consultative Council, which would mean adopting a two-chamber system when discussing and passing bills.

With regard to the economy, the Preparatory Committee recommended that the National Dialogue General Congress debate issues pertaining to continuing the economic reform process toward the attainment of a market economy, while at the same time specifying the state's role in this transformation.

The Preparatory Committee recommended the elimination of all obstacles hindering economic development and investment. It called for providing backing for cooperatives and encouraging the citizens to participate in industrial and agricultural economic development plans.

The Preparatory Committee's report stressed the importance of paying more attention to exports, regarding this as a strategic objective. It urged combating deviant practices, economic corruption, and the theft of public wealth. It recommended greater backing for domestic industry and agriculture vis-a-vis foreign competition.

The National Dialogue Preparatory Committee recommended that the Social and Cultural Committee debate the future of education in Egypt, the anti-illiteracy campaign, population affairs and family planning, and human health.

The committee emphasized the need to confront violence, fanaticism, and terrorism.

It called for developing rural areas and creating a balance between them and urban areas.

Libya

Al-Qadhdhafi Holds Talks With Malian Delegation

LD1806080694 Tripoli Voice of Greater Arab Homeland in Arabic 0300 GMT 18 Jun 94

[Text] The brother leader of the revolution [Mu'ammar al-Qadhdhafi] met yesterday evening with Malian President Alpha Oumar Konare, who is currently visiting the Great Jamahiriyah. The meeting was attended by: the assistant secretary for women's affairs at the secretariat of the General People's Congress; Mrs. Sy Khadiatou Sow, secretary of the General People's Committee for Foreign Liaison and International Cooperation; the Malian minister of foreign affairs, Malians abroad, and African integration; the minister for women's affairs; and Moussa Coulibaly, political adviser to the presidency.

During this meeting, the two sides discussed bilateral relations and ways to strengthen and develop relations in all fields, and also the latest developments in African and international issues of mutual interest.

Sudan

Former Premier al-Mahdi, Others Arrested

NC2006210294 Cairo MENA in Arabic 2030 GMT 20 Jun 94

[Text] Khartoum, 20 Jun (MENA)—Sudanese security forces today arrested al-Sadiq al-Mahdi, former prime minister and leader of the dissolved Ummah Party, along with a large group of prominent members in the Ummah Party on charges of involvement in a conspiratorial organization. Sudanese Television said this evening that the detainees are: Dr. Hammad 'Umar Baqadi, member of the Ummah Party Political Bureau; Brigadier General Ma'ash 'Abd-al-Rahman Farah, former adviser to the Sudanese security department; and Sayf-al-Din Sa'id, member of the secretariat of security and information in the Ummah Party. The television said that the detention took place after the officials had set the hour for the arrests.

A security source stated that based on monitored information and movements of the detainees, al-Mahdi was arrested after investigations proved his complicity in a conspiracy. He stressed that the competent agencies would inform the public of any new details or developments.

Foreign Minister on U.S. Relations, Hala'ib

JN1906095294 Amman A L-DUSTUR in Arabic 19 Jun 94 p 24

[Report by Muhammad Dalbah]

[Text] Tunis—Sudanese Foreign Minister Dr. Husayn Sulayman Abu-Salih has ruled out his country's participation in the multilateral talks at the present time. In an interview with AL-DUSTUR while attending the 30th Organization of African Unity [OAU] summit, the Sudanese foreign minister said that Israel is supplying the rebel movement in southern Sudan with weapons. He said: We call for ending foreign interference. He added: How can you ask me to hold negotiations with you while you stab me in the back and harm me?

He said: If there is a genuine approach to peace and noninterference in the affairs of others, and if there is to be coexistence, then all causes for harm, war, and sedition must be eliminated. Only then, can we hold dialogue within a political body of scholars, intellectuals, and others. Until then, it is impossible to think about that.

On the southern Sudanese problem and the rebellion led by John Garang, he said that foreign assistance comes from across the Sudanese-Ugandan border where he has a very narrow strip of a few km long. There are contacts with Uganda on not having any party carry out actions that harm the other party, or offering any kind of services that facilitate the passage of weapons or other things. This will help expedite the attainment of peace.

On the relationship with the United States in light of the visit by U.S. Envoy Melissa Wells to Khartoum, Abu-Salih said that at one time the West, in general, was prejudiced against the present Sudanese government. He said: I believe that this was the result of false information. He added: Our people have never wished to antagonize the West and have never boycotted it. Our people believe that there should be many fields of cooperation with the West such as cooperaton in development, economy, science and technology, and other fields. We refuse any kind of high-handed approach, domination, or interference in Sudan's domestic affairs. In view of the misleading information, the West, at one time, adopted a pressurizing stand toward Sudan by not holding any talks or dialogue with the Sudanese government in order to remove it. Abu-Salih accused the British government of giving the United States an erroneous picture about Sudan. He said: The United Kingdom did a lot to spread rumors and disseminate misleading information that distorted Sudan's image and portrayed Sudan in a bad light. That's why the dialogue with the Americans is aimed at giving a true picture about Sudan in terms of its cooperation with others.

Abu-Salih said that dialogue was initiated following the visit by the U.S. UN Envoy Madeleine Albright to Khartoum earlier this year. This means that there is someone who is now willing to listen. The mere holding of a serious dialogue makes us hopful of reaching some formula for cooperation with a major country like the United States.

Abu-Salih said he believes the pressure the United States and the West used to put on Sudan had to do with Sudan's stand on the Arab- Israeli conflict.

He said: I will speak frankly. The Americans used to believe that we would lead the Arab and Islamic opposition, and all those who oppose a settlement with the Israelis. That's why they placed us on the terrorist list. Abu-Salih said that Albright emerged from her visit with a good impression. He said Albright discussed with Sudanese officials her belief that Sudan harbors terrorism. We told her that all these accusations are baseless. This impression can only be enhanced through further dialogue, contacts, and visits. Abu-Salih said: The Sudanese, by nature, are against terrorism. We can wage war against you, but we will never harm innocent people.

Abu-Salih added: The Americans used to think that the camps that we have for training the popular defense to support the Sudanese Army were camps for training foreigners to destabilize other countries.

Abu-Salih said his government challenges anyone to prove that a single foreigner was trained in Sudan. We are hurt when others interfere in our affairs. Therefore, we do not interfere in the affairs of others. He referred, in this context, to the relationship with Iran. He said the United States and other Western and non-Western nations speak about Sudan as if it were under Iranian control or a base for Iran. This is not true. Our relationship with Iran is similar to our relationship with any Western country, and that is all. However, it is totally untrue to say that Sudan is under the control of Iran or in the grip of Iran. Perhaps, I would not be revealing a secret if I said that our relationship with Iran was sometimes weaker than our relationship with some Western nations and that our cooperation with some Western nations was greater than that with Iran.

Abu-Salih added: The visits of Albright and then Melissa Wells represent the beginning of dialogue between us and the Americans. The visits were made at a time when we asked the neighboring states, such as Kenya, Uganda, and Ethiopia, to observe the implementation of peace. Of course, we consult with the U.S. ambassador in Khartoum and with the neighboring states to achieve this purpose.

He added that he had asked the Americans about how to come up with a realistic formula for unity in Sudan that can be protected and maintained and how to please all Sudanese within the context of equality, sovereignty, justice, and no discrimination on the basis of race, color, religion, and tribal affiliation. He said: In order to reach this formula, we have made many concessions. This is why we asked for not using the terms secular and nonsecular. We are about to prepare our document on sharing of power and resources and providing everything for the citizens to ensure success. Abu-Salih explained that Sudan had asked the Americans to benefit from their experts regarding the federal system and to give Sudan a plan and a model to enable it to arrive at this formula in a multilingual, multiracial Sudan. We want to maintain the Sudanese identity and we want citizenship to be the basis of participation. However, the movement that is led by Garang, which is linked to foreign powers, does not wish to see a solution through.

On the relationship with Egypt in light of the dispute over the Hala'ib region, the Sudanese foreign minister said the relationship should be distinguished and integral, even a relationship of unity. However, this cannot be achieved without removing the differences between the two countries. He said there are three issues that should be addressed:

The first has to do with Egypt's occupation of Hala'ib. The Egyptians do not like to talk about this issue. We are talking about a triangle and this means a piece of land. However, the Egyptians are talking about parallel 22, which is not an expanse of land.

The area of Hala'ib amounts to 36,000 square km. According to the Sudanese foreign minister, Hala'ib is Sudanese land because there are Sudanese tribes in it that use a non-Arabic language. No one in Egypt speaks any language other than Arabic. Hala'ib is also considered a Sudanese electoral constituency. They told us that they plan to have two constituencies at Hala'ib. However, Egyptian legislators and lawmen talk about the annexation of Hala'ib. This means Hala'ib is a usurped piece of Sudan. Had it been Egyptian territory, it would have been part of Egyptian constituencies a long time ago. The question of Hala'ib was raised in 1958, but the late Egyptian President Jamal 'Abd-al-Nasir froze the issue at the time after showing understanding of the situation and withdrawing the Egyptian troops.

Abu-Salih revealed that the Egyptian military presence in Hala'ib had taken place with Sudan's approval as Sudan has given Egypt 10 observation posts there, and that the Egyptians are now occupying these 10 posts.

Abu-Salih stressed that Sudan accepts any Arab mediation or arbitration, or the referral of the issue to the International Court of Justice because we have a right to that area. Sudan is not made up of Hala'ib only. Sudan's area is around 1 million square miles. But what has pained us is that Hala'ib has been taken by force. We are against such a method and this issue must be settled. He said he changed his mind about submitting the Hala'ib issue for discussion at the OAU summit after some African countries advised him that it would be better if other parties do not intervene between Sudan and Egypt.

He said: We withdrew the issue but insisted that there should be negotiations and a solution, and that Hala'ib is Sudanese.

Abu-Salih said that following the meeting between Egyptian President Husni Mubarak and his Sudanese counterpart 'Umar al- Bashir, the two countries' foreign ministers were charged with studying the issue and proposing a solution. He said that he went to Egypt seven times to discuss the issue with Egyptian Foreign Minister 'Amr Musa, who, as yet, has not paid a single visit to Sudan. He stressed that, for sure, this issue is one of occupation. We do not want to exacerbate the situation. But, like so many others, we do not want to keep Hala'ib under occupation. The Hala'ib issue might lead to many things. It may bring about war. However, he said that both parties act in a calm manner although there are Egyptian and Sudanese troops in the area.

Abu-Salih said: The second issue deals with the Sudanese opposition. The Egyptians say that Egypt is the mother of all and that they cannot refuse any demand. However, Abu-Salih said that this does not mean that everyone should be given the right to write in the opposition press, participate in its actvities, or finance it. He said that this issue in Egyptian-Sudanese relations is a secondary issue.

The Sudanese minister said that the third and very important issue is that of trust between Egypt and Sudan. Abu-Salih stressed that there is no trust between the two sides. Egypt does not trust the ruling regime in Sudan and says that it is a regime which represents the Islamic National Front. We also do not trust them. Abu-Salih said that had it not been for the Sudanese people's support for the ideas and concepts of the present regime in Sudan, which have been discussed in more than 25 conferences on political, social, peace, and economic issues, the present regime in Sudan would not have remained in power.

Abu-Salih sharply criticized they way in which Cairo deals with the regime in Sudan. They say that this is al-Turabi's government or the regime of Hasan al-Turabi, and speak only about Egypt's interests, Egypt's history, and Egyptian sacrifices. This means they do not trust us, and we also do not trust them. Had they wanted relations to retun to normal, they would have exchanged visits with us. They want us to hold discussions and dialogue with them but they refuse to have such discussions in Khartoum or in any other Arab or nonArab country? They do not want to discuss things with us. He said: There is no doubt that Egyptian officials are under the illusion that the Sudanese government might collapse at any moment. They will deal with the government on which they can impose their will. But, we say that our government is there to stay and will fight. This also means that there will be rivers of blood if this government does not fall.

Export Revenue Figures for 1993-94 Released

EA1806170994 Khartoum SUNA in English 1020 GMT 17 Jun 94

[Text] Khartoum, 17 Jun (SUNA)—The actual exportation revenues for the fiscal year 1993-94 have reached 431.5 million dollars. The earnings of the exportation contracts have reached 535 million dollars.

The balance sheet of the foreign currency for the fiscal year 1994-95, shows that certain commodities have generated profitable revenues.

The foreign currency balance sheet also showed that oil seeds earnings have reached 90 million dollars higher than the estimated revenues.

Opposition Radio To Operate From Non-Arab State

NC1806154394 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1520 GMT 18 Jun 94

[Text] Cairo, 18 Jun (MENA)—Faruq Abu-'Isa, a prominent member of the Sudanese opposition, has stated that a radio speaking for the Sudanese opposition will begin transmission early next week.

At a news conference today, Abu-'Isa said that the radio will operate from a certain state, which he did not specify. He affirmed, however, that it is a non-Arab state.

Abu-'Isa, who is the secretary general of the Arab Lawyers Federation, reiterated that all factions of the Sudanese opposition are coordinating their work through the Sudanese National Democratic Grouping.

Western Sahara

President Denounces Moroccan Stance on Peace Plan

LD2006090094 (Clandestine) National Radio of the Saharan Democratic Arab Republic in Arabic 2300 GMT 19 Jun 94

[Text] Mohamed Abdelaziz, secretary general of the Polisario Front, held a news conference at the 27 February national school, attended by the national and Spanish media accompanying a visiting Spanish delegation.

The brother president said that the Western Sahara issue is an issue of special interest and was the subject of deep concern for the presidents of the African states who attended the 30th OAU summit.

The brother president pointed out that the latest proposal put forward by the Polisario Front, calling for the convening of an international conference for giving a boost to the UN peace plan on Western Sahara, is considered by the organization as a constructive initiative and was approved in a report by the OAU secretary general.

With regard to a question related to Morocco's stance, which rejects OAU participation, the brother president said that Morocco has constantly used all forms of maneuvering and procrastination and today it rejects the OAU participation in the identification process and this is a blatant violation of the text and spirit of the UN-OAU peace plan based on African resolution 104.

The brother president added: Through our contacts with the various African heads of states, we made a full denunciation of the Moroccan stance which calls basically for blowing up the UN-OAU peace plan, stipulating the organization of a free, just, and unbiased referendum for the Saharan people. He highlighted that this Moroccan stance is dangerous and would put Morocco in a clear and open conflict with the UN, the OAU and international legality. [passage indistinct].

The brother president said that the Saharan people are preparing for all possibilities and will continue to give serious and full cooperation to the UN and the OAU [passage indistinct].

Voters' Identification Process Postponed

LD1706174794 Algiers Radio Algiers Network in Arabic 1700 GMT 17 Jun 94

[Text] The process of identifying participants in the self-determination referendum in Western Sahara has been postponed until further notice. The reason for the postponement is Morocco's refusal to allow observers from the Organization of African Unity to attend that process.

Kuwait

Amir Receives French Chief of General Staff

LD1806134994 Kuwait KUNA in Arabic 0934 GMT 18 Jun 94

[Excerpts] Kuwait, 18 Jun (KUNA)—Admiral Jacques Lanxade, chief of the general staff of the French Armed Forces, and an accompanying delegation met here today with Shaykh Jabir al-Ahmad al-Sabah, amir of the State of Kuwait. [passage omitted]

Lanxade had arrived in Kuwait yesterday on an official visit that is to last a few days.

[Kuwait KUNA in Arabic at 1003 GMT on 18 June reports that Shaykh Sa'd al-'Abdallah, heir apparent and Kuwaiti prime minister, also received Admiral Lanxade and the accompanying delegation.]

Admiral Lanxade Comments on Talks

LD1806203394 Kuwait KUNA in Arabic 1603 GMT 18 Jun 94

[Excerpts] Kuwait, 18 Jun (KUNA)—Admiral Jacques Lanxade, the French chief of general staff said today that his meetings with Kuwaiti officials focused on looking into means of bilateral military cooperation and reviewing the overall situation in the Gulf region.

In a statement to the Kuwaiti news agency he said: Military cooperation between France and Kuwait goes a long time back, we now have teams working on helicopters and aircraft. We are also in the process of discussing joint projects in connection with other aspects of the armed forces.

He added that he had discussed with Kuwaiti officials a project on patrol boats. These boats are being manufactured by a French company that supplies the French Armed Forces with boats. Oman also has purchased a number of boats from this company.

The French admiral, who is on a two-day visit to Kuwait said that France is concerned with the security of the Gulf region. Admiral Lanxade said: France clearly supports the need for Iraq to implement all the UN Security Council resolutions and recognize Kuwait's sovereignty.

He went on to say that he had told Kuwaiti officials France could supply Kuwait with radar equipment and air defense rockets. France is making considerable efforts in the field of defense because we realize that the world is currently unstable and we have a role to play as a permanent member of the UN Security Council, he said.

Admiral Lanxade added: We have elements working now in Saudi Arabia and Turkey to follow up the monitoring of Iraqi air space and we took part in the embargo on the Jordanian port of al-'Aqabah.

He said that the current exercises between the Kuwaitis and the French are aimed at stressing that there is military cooperation between the two countries.

Admiral Lanxade said: These exercises are a message to the neighborhood and are a means of developing the operational aspects of relations between our forces. They are also a means that would enable us to work together if the need rises. [passage omitted]

Lanxade stressed: The importance of the military deals between France and Kuwait are not of mere commercial importance. In fact the existence of a joint project between the Armed Forces of the two countries provides a real opportunity for joint operations, an element that is more important than the commercial interests.

Regarding the situation in Yemen he said: We believe the situation is serious in Yemen and wish for the hostilities to be stopped.

He added that the French naval forces had evacuated a number of people out of Yemen including foreign nationals more than French citizens. The Yemeni issue is serious because it affects the security of the Arab peninsular, he said.

Lanxade said that France had 10 warships opposite Djibouti, about 4,000 French troops stationed there, forces in the south of the Indian Ocean, and 150 soldiers of the French Air Force in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia.

Joint Exercises With French Air Force Begin

LD1806103294 Kuwait KUNA in Arabic 0917 GMT 18 Jun 94

[Text] Kuwait, 18 Jun (KUNA)—The Kuwaiti and French Air Forces began joint exercises here today, code-named "Desert Mirage". These are the first exercises to begin from Ahmad al-Jabir air base since it was rebuilt.

French Mirage 2000 aircraft, which arrived in Kuwait yesterday, are taking part in the two-day exercises. These fall in the framework of a joint defense cooperation agreement signed between Kuwait and France, which is aimed at strengthening military cooperation between the two countries, raising the fighting capability, and increasing the military competence of the Kuwaiti forces.

Commander Comments on Exercise

LD1906152994 Kuwait KUNA in Arabic 1330 GMT 19 Jun 94

[Excerpt] Kuwait, 19 Jun (KUNA)—Pilot Staff Colonel Nasir al-Hujayl, commander of Ahmad al-Jabir air base, said today that the joint exercise that the Kuwaiti Air Force is conducting with the French Air Force has great importance in raising the Kuwaiti pilot's competence in dog fighting and ground assault. [passage omitted]

He pointed out that six "F-18" combat planes took part in the exercise on the Kuwaiti side, while the French participated with four "Mirage 2000" planes.

The commander of the base said that the team which took part in this exercise consisted of 60 people, including pilots, technicians, and administrators.

He pointed out that the third phase for rebuilding the Ahmad al- Jabir air base, which was destroyed by the Iraqi forces during the period of occupation, would start during the coming months. [passage omitted]

British Admiral Makes Official Two-Day Visit

Admiral's Agenda Previewed

LD1906150894 Kuwait KUNA in Arabic 1214 GMT 19 Jun 94

[Text] Kuwait, 19 Jun (KUNA)—Admiral Sir Benjamin Bathurst, British chief of the Naval Staff, will arrive here this evening on a two-day official visit to Kuwait during which he will discuss the issue of Kuwait's security and the joint military exercises with the Kuwaiti officials.

The British Embassy in Kuwait said in a statement today, of which KUNA has received a copy, that this visit is a new model for the strong ties between the two Navies which have been strengthened by the principal role played by these forces during the war to liberate the State of Kuwait.

The embassy added that this visit confirms the United Kingdom's continued concern for the security of Kuwait.

It pointed out that the visiting admiral will discuss the continued rounds of joint military exercises between Kuwaiti military ships and the royal ships of the Armilla Patrol in the Gulf.

The forthcoming exercises of these forces are scheduled to take place next September during the visit of HMS Cornwall.

During his visit, Admiral Bathurst will meet with Defense Minister Shaykh Ahmad al-Hamud, General 'Ali Mu'min, chief of the general staff, and Dr. Hamud al-'Utaybi, under secretary at the Defense Ministry.

Admiral Bathurst will also meet with Commander Muhammad Yaqut al-Fayruz, deputy-commander of the Kuwaiti Navy, during his visit to the naval base in al-Julay'ah.

It is worth mentioning that the United States, Britain, France, and Russia have signed defense agreements with Kuwait since the end of the war to liberate the State of Kuwait in February 1991.

Bathurst Affirms Role in Gulf Region

LD2006214694 Kuwait KUNA in Arabic 1930 GMT 20 Jun 94

[Excerpts] Kuwait, 20 June (KUNA)—Admiral Sir Benjamin Bathurst, chief of the Naval Staff of the British Royal Navy, said here today that the British presence in the region will continue as long as there is a need for it.

He described the Kuwaiti naval base in Ras al-Qulaya'h as "one of the most advanced in the world."

Bathurst told a news conference that the aim of his current visit to Kuwait is to continue developing strong ties between the two countries in the defense field, especially in the naval sphere.

Bathurst, who is visiting Kuwait as part of a Gulf tour which will include the Sultanate of Oman and the United Arab Emirates, stressed Britain's strong commitment to continue protecting Arab Gulf security in the future and to continue its military presence as long as the situation requires it.

This morning Bathurst met Defense Minister Shaykh Ahmad al-Hamud al-Sabah and Major General 'Ali al-Mu'men [name as received], General Chief of Staff. [passage omitted]

The British Royal Navy chief of staff said his talks with Kuwaiti officials concentrated on issues related to Kuwaiti naval forces and Kuwait's intention to buy patrol boats. He stated that the talks also dealt with joint exercises. The British-Kuwaiti exercises, he said, will take place in September.

"We have to take every opportunity to carry out joint exercises. I hope that joint exercises with Arab Gulf Cooperation Council states and coalition forces will take place in the future," the British naval commander said.

"There was an emphasis on training members of the Kuwaiti naval forces in the United Kingdom. I welcome the presence of members of the Kuwaiti Navy at technical courses, from the highest to the lowest levels."

Bathurst clarified that the talks gave him the opportunity to express the United Kingdom's support for Security Council resolutions on sanctions against the Iraqi regime.

"The Iraqi Navy still has some capabilities, particularly missiles, which still pose a threat, but the situation will remain under control as long as we are cautious and maintain our presence in the region," Bathurst said.

"The United Kingdom will continue to raise the issue of Kuwaiti prisoners at the Security Council."

He said the talks also dealt with the conflict in Yemen and stressed Britain's support for Security Council Resolution 924, calling for an immediate cease-fire and the sending of international observers.

Bathurst is expected to leave Kuwait for Britain tomorrow morning, ending his Gulf tour. [passage omitted]

Yemen

Northern-Southern Cease-Fire Talks in Cairo End

South Yemeni Delegation Leaves

NC2006141294 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1230 GMT 20 Jun 94

[Text] Cairo, 20 Jun (MENA)—The south Yemeni delegation led by Presidential Council member Salim Salih Muhammad left Cairo this afternoon for a tour of the Arab Maghreb, during which it will brief the officials there on the latest developments in Yemen.

Muhsin Farid, deputy chairman of the Presidential Council, made the following predeparture statement: We should adopt the necessary measures for establishing an immediate cease-fire in Yemen in accordance with UN Security Council Resolution 924. We came here with the knowledge that the brothers in Sanaa were not bringing anything serious with them. Instead, they came to waste time.

Musa on Hopes for Ending Fighting

NC2006144594 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1403 GMT 20 Jun 94

[Text] Cairo, 20 Jun (MENA)—Foreign Minister 'Amr Musa has announced that efforts and contacts to conclude a lasting cease-fire in Yemen are continuing. He pointed out that he had met with the UN secretary general's envoy, Lakhdar Brahimi, to discuss this issue and added that the contacts that Egypt is conducting seek a cease-fire agreement.

The foreign minister continued: "We have not lost hope of reaching a cease-fire agreement."

He said that the Yemeni issue is "complicated and requires great efforts."

Musa added that a big gap still separates the positions of the warring Yemeni parties and there are several reasons that still preclude an agreement. He said this requires further efforts by Egypt and the United Nations to reach a solution.

Musa said he hopes the fighting in Yemen will not escalate in such a way as to harm the prospects of "achieving a breakthrough rather than complicating the matter further".

Noting the need to protect the Yemeni citizens in various towns, he said current efforts are concentrating on ending the fighting, and Egypt is contacting the United Nations and other parties for this purpose.

UN Envoy Brahimi Leaves Cairo for Paris

NC2006163694 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1615 GMT 20 Jun 94

[Text] Cairo, 20 Jun (MENA)—Lakhdar Brahimi, the UN secretary general's envoy to Yemen, left Cairo for the French capital today following a three-day visit to Egypt. During his stay Brahimi met with President Husni Mubarak, Foreign Minister 'Amr Musa, Arab League Secretary General Dr. 'Ismat 'Abd-al-Majid, and two delegations from north and south Yemen.

North Official Views Crisis, Brahimi Mission

NC2006200894 Cairo Arab Republic of Egypt Radio Network in Arabic 1740 GMT 20 Jun 94

[Interview with 'Abdallah al-Akwa', spokesman for the north Yemeni delegation visiting Cairo, by Shadiyah Riyad; date not given; from "The Talking Newspaper" program—recorded]

[Text] [Riyad] Mr. al-Akwa', Lakhdar Brahimi, envoy of Dr. Butrus-Ghali, has not succeeded in arranging a meeting between the two [north and south Yemeni] sides. Nor has he succeeded in attaining an agreement over a mechanism for observing a cease-fire. Do you see this as a failure of Lakhdar Brahimi's mission?

[Al-Akwa'] First of all, I thank you for this interview. In the name of God, the compassionate, the merciful. I wish to comment on the description given to us as being the Sanaa delegation. We did not come here in the capacity of a delegation representing only Sanaa but as a delegation representing the country's ruling three-party coalition, the General People's Congress, the Yemeni Reform Grouping, and the Yemeni Socialist Party [YSP]. We came to Cairo on this basis and in order to meet with the representatives of the third coalition partner, the YSP. When we arrived, however, we discovered that they were insisting that they represented an independent state. This is of course impractical and unacceptable.

[Riyad] 'Abdallah al-Asnaj [foreign minister in south Yemen] has declared that the coalition delegation, as you have described it, has no authority to make decisions.

[Al-Akwa'] 'Abdallah al-Asnaj has no justification to say such things. What is the authorization needed to make decisions? When a certain party sends an envoy on a particular mission, this means it gives him powers equal to his mission.

[Riyad] 'Abdallah al-Asnaj has remarked that Aden's delegation has the power to make decisions pertaining to a cease-fire.

[Al-Akwa'] I wish to say this: He represents a rebellious party and can claim to have power. In actual fact, they always avoid reaching a solution. Formerly when we and they held a political dialogue, I was a member of the political dialogue committee. Whenever we came close

to a solution, they provoked disputes and introduced new debates to lead us into an endless maze that would prevent a solution.

[Riyad] Why does the fighting continue so fiercely despite the two sides having accepted the idea of dialogue and the UN Security Council resolution which provides for a cease-fire. Sanaa bears the blame for continuing the war, or at least everyone is saying that it is to blame.

[Al-'Akwa'] This is a very simple matter. A permanent cease-fire aims to encourage the international community to intervene and disengage the two warring sides. This is the rebels' objective. From the beginning the rebels sought not to solve the crisis or observe a cease-fire in a normal way. They were afraid that if this happened, the citizens would think more about the situation and distance themselves from the rebels' goal, namely seceding by force. Their aim is to continue the fighting and to provoke an international response. They went so far as to attack civilian targets inside Aden in order to claim that the legitimate forces had carried out those attacks. They did this to justify intervention by international troops to disengage the warring parties. They wanted to guarantee their secession.

[Riyad] Foreign Minister 'Amr Musa has stated that Egypt stresses the need for observing an immediate cease-fire because continuing the fighting would devour all chances of safeguarding unity. Under the current circumstances, how do you view the future of this unity?

[Al-Akwa'] Truly, all the Yemeni people support unity. When we say they are rebels we do not say it just for the sake of making accusations. They claim that they want to secede the south. But they do not represent the south or the wishes of the people of the south. They fail to understand the geographical reality of the south. They are now deployed in extremely small areas. Let's take for example the southern governorates. Lahij is currently under the control of legitimacy; Abyan is also under the control of legitimacy; parts of Shabwah, Aden, and Hadhramaut are under the control of legitimacy. They are deployed in a very small area. They have no popular support. They rely on party forces. They rely on individuals who have received party education. This is evident in the support that the citizens in the southern and eastern governorates give to the legitimate forces.

The rebels' forces have been expelled not only by the legitimate army but also by the citizens in those areas, whether in Abyan, Shabwah, Hadhramaut, or Lahij. The security and administrative affairs in the areas that were regained by the legitimate forces are being supervised by their sons and not by the legitimate forces.

This is obvious and any person can verify this on the ground. We do not consider our brothers in Egypt as a foreign party. We believe that we have common blood with our brothers in Egypt. Yemeni and Egyptian blood was shed and it watered the Yemeni land to achieve and establish the Yemeni revolution. The revolution's principal objective was to achieve the Yemeni unity.

[Riyad] What is the next step now that UN Envoy Lakhdar Brahimi has failed in his mission?

[Al-Akwa'] I do not believe that he has failed.

[Riyad] But he failed to bring the two sides together, or to achieve a unified formula of a mechanism for halting the fighting.

[Al-Akwa'] I am definite that Lakhdar Brahimi has not yet announced that he has failed. It was the rebels' representatives who said that Brahimi has failed. This is because they had built their calculations on this basis—that Brahimi would fail in his mission. They made the announcement before Brahimi said anything. Brahimi has not failed, but they tried to place obstacles to undermine his mission by insisting that they represent an independent state. If we were prepared to accept them as an independent state, there would have never been a problem or a war. But the problem cropped up when they tried to impose secession and set up an independent state by force. It was the responsibility of the government and the legitimate forces to defend unity. They started to use force to impose secession.

[Riyad] Does this mean that the dialogue will continue and that there is hope that an agreement will be reached?

[Al-Akwa'] We are interested working out an actual mechanism for a cease-fire. We believe that every day that passes means more blood will be shed and more people will be killed. This will only complicate the issue. Every day that passes means more efforts will be needed to resolve the problem. Therefore, we are very interested in working out a mechanism that could achieve a cease-fire immediately.

[Riyad] Thank you.

[Al-Akwa'] You are welcome.

North's 'Hard-Liners' Advocate Fight 'To the End'

PM2106085194 London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT in Arabic 20 Jun 94 p 3

[Report by Salih Qallab: "Reports of Disagreements Among Northern Leaders. Hard-Liners Insist on Fighting to the End"]

[Text] Amman—A senior Yemeni official has said over the telephone from Sanaa that a sharp disagreement has erupted among senior northern leaders over the mission of the UN secretary general's envoy, Lakhdar Brahimi, and the proposal he submitted two days ago to hold a meeting in Cairo between Sanaa and Aden delegations.

The official said that the disagreement necessitated holding an emergency meeting under Yemeni President

'Ali 'Abdallah Salih. It was attended by Shaykh 'Abdallah Bin-Husayn al-Ahmar, speaker of the House of Representatives, Dr. 'Abd-al-Majid al-Zindani, and 'Abdallah al-Anisi, representing the Yemeni Reform Grouping [YRG]; and by Dr. 'Abd-al-Karim al-Iryani, Dr. Muhammad Sa'id al-'Attar, and Colonel 'Ali Muhsin al-Ahmar, representing the General People's Congress [GPC].

The official said that a severe disagreement dominated the meeting, and that Dr. al-Iryani was the first speaker, maybe in coordination with President 'Ali Salih. And that he—that is, al-Iryani—stressed that Sanaa has tried everything to resolve the situation, and it is impossible for things to continue in this manner forever.

According to the Yemeni official, al-Iryani stressed that his country has become isolated and has lost the support of neighboring states and numerous Arab states. And that it has been placed in the category of Iraq and Iraqi President Saddam Husayn—which will lead it into an unenviable situation.

Al-Iryani proposed that President 'Ali 'Abdallah Salih personally make an Arab tour to include neighboring states, Egypt, and some other states in order to break what he termed the political siege imposed on Sanaa. He also proposed that southern [as published] deputies make an Arab tour to explain the northern Yemeni capital's view of the ongoing war.

The Yemeni official stressed that the YRG leaders—Shaykh al-Ahmar, 'Abd-al-Wahhab al-Anisi, and Dr. al-Zindani, supported by Col. Muhsin al-Ahmar—rejected the idea of sending a delegation to Cairo and insisted on continuing the fighting and not responding to the UN mediation. They said that Aden is now in their grasp and that any cease-fire is going to make them lose the military battle after having lost the political battle.

The official pointed out that President Salih is in an unenviable mental situation. That he has made great efforts to persuade senior members of his leadership to send a northern delegation to Cairo. And that he threatened to boycott the meeting before the participants agreed to his proposal in this connection.

The Yemeni official noted that the delegation Sanaa sent to Cairo has a partisan and not an official capacity—which means that the northern leadership insists that the dialogue with the southerners must remain within the framework that existed before the eruption of the fighting, as discussions were conducted between the GPC and the YRG on the one hand and the Yemeni Socialist Party on the other.

U.S. Said Losing Patience With Sanaa

PM2006134194 London AL-HAYAH in Arabic 18 Jun 94 pp 1, 4

[Reports by Raghidah Dirgham in New York, Sulayman Nimr in Sanaa, Iqbal 'Ali 'Abdallah in Aden, and 'Abdallah al-Hajj in Jeddah: "U.S. Pressure To Prevent Storming of Aden"]

[Excerpts] Northern military pressure on Aden continued yesterday. The city was the target of heavy shelling. [passage omitted]

AL-HAYAH learned yesterday that Washington was exerting pressure to prevent the storming of Aden but it also preferred, at least for the time being and in order to facilitate political solutions, not to impose political isolation on the north.

Meanwhile, circles of former President 'Ali Nasir Muhammad yesterday broke their silence and reaffirmed his refusal to assume any leadership responsibilities in Yemen while the infighting and secessionist activity continued. They also emphasized that 'Ali Nasir Muhammad's supporters had nothing to do with the current conflict. They added that he urged all parties to stop shelling Aden. [passage omitted]

AL-HAYAH has learned from Arab sources in contact with the U.S. Administration that Washington was beginning to "lose its patience" with Sanaa because of its continued bombardment of Aden. They said that Washington "opposes the storming of Aden and at the same time advises the other side and the states of the region to be patient and to play a calming role."

The sources also said that, while Washington was firm about the need to control Sanaa and prevent it exploiting [UN Secretary General special envoy] Brahimi's mission to complete its military resolution of the situation, it was advising the regional states concerned to delay playing the "secession recognition" card in order to avoid the hardening of positions and military escalation, and "urging that Sanaa should not be isolated at this stage." [passage omitted]

Sanaa Reacts to U.S. Statement on Aden

JN1806124394 Sanaa Yemeni Republic Radio Network in Arabic 1200 GMT 18 Jun 94

[Statment issued by "an official source"; place and date not given]

[Text] The Republic of Yemen has followed, with concern, the statement made by the official spokeswoman of the U.S. State Department in Wahington last night. In the statement she spoke about assertions received by the U.S. Administration from the Government of the Republic of Yemen that the Armed Forces will not enter into the city of Aden.

The Government of the Republic of Yemen would like to affirm that it previously informed the Governments of the United States and the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia that the Government of the Republic of Yemen will delay the entry of the Armed Forces, the forces of unity and legitimacy, into Aden to chase the remnants of rebellious secessions, who are using the civilian citizens as human shields, if it finds an appropriate political solution based on ending the rebellion, holding dialogue within the framework of the Republic of Yemen, on adhering to its Constitution and constitutional legitimacy resulting from the elections of 27 April 1993, and on stopping interference in internal Yemeni affairs to end the war and stop Yemeni bloodshed.

The Government of the Republic of Yemen would like to remind all that the continuation of the present situation, the continuation of secession and violation of constitutional legitimacy, and the continuation of arms and military hardware supplies to secessionists to prolong the conflict call on the Government of the Republic of Yemen to shoulder its national and constitutional responsibility to end the secession. It finds itself forced—in accordance with its constitutional and legal right—to deal with the violators of constitutional legitimacy in the appropriate way and in any part of the Yemeni territory.

The Government of the Republic of Yemen hopes that brothers and friends will understand this.

GPC Official Rejects U.S. Statement as 'Interference'

PM2006151694 London AL-HAYAH in Arabic 19 Jun 94 pp1, 4

[Reports by Raghidah Dirgham in New York, Faysal Makram in Sanaa, Iqbal 'Abdallah in Aden, and Ashraf al-Faqiyy in Cairo: "Sanaa: The United States Is Interfering in Our Internal Affairs"]

[Excerpts] The meeting scheduled to take place in Cairo today between the parties to the Yemeni conflict is facing difficulties because of the fundamental differences between these parties. [passage omitted]

In another important development, Sanaa yesterday denied promising the United States not to storm Aden. A General People's Congress [GPC] senior official went so far as to say that the statement issued by the U.S. State Department "is a flagrant and rejected interference in the internal affairs of the Yemeni Republic."

In New York, it has been learned that the government of the Yemen Arab Republic conveyed to Lakhdar Brahimi, the UN secretary general's envoy, its position on the Cairo meeting between delegations from Sanaa and Aden to discuss a mechanism for the supervision of the cease-fire, emphasizing that the meeting should take the form of indirect talks, not face to face, should be based on the existing government coalition, and should not constitute any form of recognition or dealing with the secessionists. [passage omitted]

In Sanaa, in the first reaction to the U.S. State Department's recent statement, the Yemeni Government denied promising the U.S. Administration that the government's armed forces would not enter Aden. A responsible sources said that "the Yemeni Government had informed the U.S. and Saudi Governments that it would postpone the entry of the forces of legitimacy and unity into Aden in pursuit of the remnants of the rebel secessionists if the government found a suitable political solution based on ending the mutiny and holding a dialogue within the framework of the Yemeni Republic with commitment to the Constitution and the constitutional legitimacy resulting from 27 April 1993, as well as noninterference in Yemen's internal affairs, to end the war and spare blood." [passage omitted]

'Abd-al-Salam al-'Ansi, head of the General Department and member of the General Committee of the General People's Congress [GPC], has stated that the U.S. State Department's statement came as a surprise and was illogical and the GPC saw it as flagrant interference in Yemen's internal affairs.

In a statement to AL-HAYAH in Sanaa yesterday, he said that the GPC totally rejects the U.S. State Department's statement and sees it as a flagrant and rejected interference in the internal affairs of the Yemen Arab Republic, because the current war in Yemen is a war between the legitimate and constitutional government forces and a band of secessionists from some leaderships of the Yemeni Socialist Party [YSP]. What the legitmate forces are doing comes under the constitutional rights of the Yemeni Republic's Government." [quotation marks as published]

In conclusion, al-'Ansi said: "The Yemeni Government and the legitimate forces care more about Aden, its population, and its installations than the U.S. Administration or anyone else, and the government forces' entry into Aden does not depend on an U.S. or non-U.S. permit. It is rather a question of the government's concern for the lives, properties, and human rights of the innocent population, and of preserving economic and public establishments in the city. When the time comes for the legitimate forces to enter the city in pursuit of the secessionist remnants, there would be nothing to prevent them from entering the city any time the military and political commands decide that the lives of the citizens are safe from any danger."

Southern Minister on Brahimi's 'Failure'

JN2106085494 Paris Radio Monte Carlo in Arabic 1936 GMT 20 Jun 94

[Interview with 'Abdallah al-Asnaj, "foreign minister of the Democratic Republic of Yemen", by Salah Salamah on 20 June; place not given; from the "Today's Guest" program—recorded]

[Text] [Salamah] Mr. 'Abdallah al-Asnaj, foreign minister of the Democratic Republic of Yemen, which was unilaterally declared almost one month ago. You are welcome to Radio Monte Carlo.

[Al-Asnaj] You are welcome.

[Salamah] Arab and international efforts to settle the dispute have failed. Battles are continuing. Aden is besieged and is being exposed to daily shelling. What is the current military balance of forces in the battles between the northern and southern units?

[Al-Asnaj] As you have said, battles are continuing. The siege on the Yemeni citizens in the Aden Governorate reached its peak when water and electricity supplies were cut and when hospitals and public utilities were destroyed by the invading northern military units.

[Salamah] Lakhdar Brahimi, the international mediator in the Yemeni dispute, failed yesterday and today to hold a meeting of the northern and southern delegations present in Cairo, with the aim of agreeing on a mechanism to monitor the cease-fire preparatory to sitting at the negotiating table. What are the reasons for this failure

[Al-Asnaj] Lakhdar Brahimi has not succeeded in holding a meeting between the northern and southern sides at the negotiating table, or at least in getting acquainted with the viewpoint of the northern side in a precise way, because the northern side has not assigned a delegation on a level authorized to make a serious decision, such as cease-fire, or to agree on a mechanism to monitor a firm cease-fire.

[Salamah] Mr. 'Abdallah al-Asnaj: Sanaa sources today affirmed that the northern delegation had all powers to hold a dialogue, provided this is done within the framework of the ruling coalition, the Republic of Yemen, and constitutional legitimacy. These sources said you refused to meet with the northern delegation. Does this mean that you shoulder a moral responsibility for the failure?

[Al-Asnaj] This is another falsehood on the part of Sanaa. First, the delegation that came to Cairo represented the General People's Congress [GPC] and the Yemeni Reform Grouping [YRG]. The delegation did not represent the central authority in Sanaa. The members of the delegation are known to everyone; they are incapable of forcing 'Ali 'Abdallah Salih, the small dictator of Sanaa, to adopt a stand of which he himself is not convinced, or to make a cease-fire decision and abide by it.

So, the delegation did not have authority, was not on the required level, and its members were known. I do not have to reiterate this. The delegation includes a southern GPC member, who is on the payroll of 'Ali 'Abdallah Salih, and brother 'Abd-al-Qadir (?al-Qayri), secretary of Shaykh 'Abdallah Bin-Husayn al-Ahmar [speaker of the House of Representatives], from the YRG. These have no capacity on the level of the central authority, which is loyal to 'Ali 'Abdallah Salih. So, the southern side bears no responsibility whatsoever because it sent a delegation on the highest level with absolute authorization. We communicated this in writing to Lakhdar Brahimi, namely, that this delegation has all powers to swiftly set an urgent date for cease-fire and to abide by this date.

I hope the picture will be clear. Sanaa is the party making accusations and the one which makes promises and does not keep them.

[Salamah] Therefore, you adhere to the demand of negotiating with a delegation that has the authority to decide?

[Al-Asnaj] Most definitely. We are a delegation that has the right to decide the fate of a people who adhere to this right, which is guaranteed by the UN Charter.

[Salamah] Recently, President 'Ali 'Abdallah Salih showed noticeable flexibility over terms to resume dialogue with the southern Leaders. However, the southern leaders insisted on entering the dialogue, as you has said, in the form of an independent government. According to Sanaa, this led to the failure of the Cairo meeting. Are you insisting on going ahead in your secession from Sanaa and on adhering to the formula of the unilaterally declared Democratic Republic of Yemen?

[Al-Asnaj] The world has never seen a president waging a war against his own people, destroying their installations and public utilities, ruining houses, and reiterating his insistence on invading a people in a besieged governorate. What kind of legitimacy is left for this ruler who declares war against his own people? The fact that this war was declared, that it is continuing, and the fact that the cease-fire demands are rejected cancel what remains of the legitimacy claimed by the northern side. Moreover, the southern side has the right to self-determination. It was a state four years ago. It voluntarily renounced its independent and regional identity and is now trying to regain it. This is nothing new.

[Salamah] Today, Salim Salih Muhammad, a member of the southern Presidential Council, demanded quick Arab and international recognition of the declared Democratic Republic of Yemen. With the exception of Qatar, the Gulf Cooperation Council states have tacitly recognized this republic. Are you going to insist on this move? Do you expect quick Arab and international recognition?

[Al-Asnaj] Having declared his indiscriminate and all-out war against our brothers in the south, there is no place for central authority or a unity that was basically destroyed by Sanaa. Unity is mutual acceptance, a covenant of cooperation, a joint responsibility. It is not hegemony, control, tyranny, and the usurpation of the right of the southern part to have an opinion and a role in drawing up the future of the homeland.

Sanaa's authority has violated everything that it was hoped it would abide by, in terms of the unity agreement,

and it unilaterally canceled the pledge and accord agreement reached in the Jordanian capital. It dismissed ministers and ambassadors and took feverish measures that no law or constitution would accept.

Sanaa voluntarily renounced its responsibility and its legitimacy. Sanaa has stripped itself of its legitimacy in the same way that it stripped Aden of it. Each side in the north and south now has an absolute right to choose the most appropriate way to preserve its rights and develop its society. In the future, there will be fields of cooperation, as they were in the past.

[Salamah] You demand the deployment of international observers to supervise the cease-fire. The northern leaders demand the revival of the joint military committee formed last December. Do you believe it is impossible to find an acceptable compromise between these two proposals, to stop the shooting and begin talking?

[Al-Asnaj] Had there been enough credibility and sincere intentions to cease fire or to stop the current war in Yemen and abide by a definite date for enforcing the cease-fire, an appropriate mechanism would be possible and ready at hand. I would like to say that the previous military committee was formed by a decision from 'Ali 'Abdallah Salih to contain and solve problems in Yemeni military camps housing joint forces. War had not broken out by then. Now the war has expanded and a military committee of the size in which it was formed at that time cannot monitor an agreed cease-fire violation on a large terrain covering almost all Yemeni territory.

[Salamah] In view of the continuing battles and the failure of Arab and international mediation, the Yemeni crisis has reached an impasse. Do you believe it is possible to reach a solution enabling the Yemeni people to stop the war and return to peace and security?

[Al-Asnaj] The Yemeni people want peace. They want to reach a quick end to this war. They are fed up with the calamities of this war that was imposed on them. However, the decision is up to those who call for the continuation of the war. It is up to 'Ali 'Abdallah Salih and his allies from the political Islamists in the reform party. I believe further Arab and international pressures will convince the little dictator in Sanaa that the international community rejects all the massacres he is carrying out against the Yemeni people in the south.

[Salamah] Observers believe the military balance of forces is tipped in favor of the northern units. Minister 'Abd-al-Karim al- Iryani said today that if a negotiated solution is not reached, there will be a determination to resort to a military solution and to occupy Aden and al-Mukalla. Do you in the south have the ability to remain steadfast and continue in the fighting, given the lopsided balance of forces?

[Al-Asnaj] I do not know if brother 'Abd-al-Karim al-Iryani is qualified to be a general and to ascertain the ability of the armed forces to reach their aims in the vast areas in Hadhramaut and to penetrate the steadfastness of Aden. Aden will remain steadfast and the north—we greatly regret to say this because the victims and the killers are children of Yemen—will pay a very high price and will not be able to have its own way if they penetrate the city of Aden. As for Hadhramaut, the results of the battles so far indicate that the southern forces repulsed all the northern forces attacks and scattered their concentrations in this vast desert, and that our northern brother soldiers wish that they had remained in Sanhan, Anif, and Hamdan, instead of being pushed by the little dictator of Sanaa into a fight in which they have no interest at all.

Aden Official Gives Sanaa 2 Days To Set Cease-Fire

PM2106103694 London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT in Arabic 20 Jun 94 p 3

[Unattributed report: "Salim Salih Tells AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT: Sanaa Has Two Days To Stop Fighting; Otherwise, We Will Demand Announcement of Recognition of South"]

[Text] Cairo, AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT—In a statement to AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT Salim Salih, member of the Yemeni Presidential Council, has given Sanaa two days to announce and comply with a cease-fire, otherwise Aden will be entitled to demand that the Security Council impose sanctions on Sanaa and announce world states' recognition of the Democratic Republic of Yemen.

He said: For our part, we are ready for anything when a cease-fire is announced first, then we can discuss the mechanism of halting the fighting.

He said: The task of the joint southern-northern committee meeting in Cairo is just to discuss the formation of the military committee or team to be assigned to monitor the cease-fire. And there is no major disagreement between us and Sanaa with regard to accepting [the participation of] Arab and Islamic states and Security Council member states, but the committee will be under UN supervision.

Salim pointed to Sanaa's defiance of the international community and the Arab community by escalating the political and military situations and by constantly shelling Aden—which proves it has no desire to halt the fighting. He said: I want [UN secretary general's envoy] Brahimi's mission to succeed and the Security Council resolutions to be complied with. We are exerting every effort to halt the fighting.

He reemphasized Aden's steadfastness despite the cutting off of water and electricity. All that Sanaa is saying about its occupation of Aden is an attempt to play for time and give public opinion the impression that the rebels have surrendered and the war is over.

He said: The issue of abolishing the state of the Democratic Republic of Yemen is now in the hands of the Yemeni people, and it is they who have to decide on it. And the people are currently fighting the occupation and the bombardment of villages and cities.

Arab League Calls On Yemeni Parties To Cooperate

NC2006104294 Cairo Arab Republic of Egypt Radio Network in Arabic 1000 GMT 20 Jun 94

[Text] Arab League Secretary General Dr. 'Ismat 'Abd-al-Majid has again called on the Yemeni parties to cooperate with Arab and UN efforts to establish a cease-fire and put an end to bloodshed and destruction in Yemen. He expressed the hope that current efforts would succeed in bringing about a cease-fire there. Dr. 'Abd-al-Majid was speaking at a joint news conference with Lakhdar Brahimi, the UN envoy on Yemen, at the conclusion of their talks today.

Dr. 'Abd-al-Majid said that the talks dealt with the latest developments in the situation. He affirmed that UN Resolution 924 and the efforts being made to stop the fighting must be supported by all means as an Arab and not just a UN responsibility. He said there was agreement to pursue contacts with the United Nations and the Yemeni parties to continue the efforts to stop the fighting.

Rocket Attack on Aden Kills 2, Wounds 17

NC2106085494 Paris AFP in English 0836 GMT 21 Jun 94

[By Maher Chmaytelli]

[Text] Aden, Yemen, June 21 (AFP)—Besieging northern forces showered Aden's suburbs with katyusha rockets in a night-time bombardment which killed at least two civilians and wounded 17, hospital officials said Tuesday [21 June].

Several rockets slammed into the Al-Qahirah and al-Mansurah areas in the north of the city and another six hit nearby hillsides, said injured civilians at Al-Jumhuriyah hospital.

The northern and southern forces were also trading artillery fire along the war fronts some 20 kilometres (12 miles) from Aden, while shells hit the city airport throwing up clouds of dust and sand.

Hospital officials said almost 90 people have been killed since northern forces loyal to President 'Ali Abdallah Salih began a systematic bombardment of this southern bastion on Thursday.

Terrified townspeople have said they are praying for their lives, as there are few places in bomb shelters for the city's 500,000 inhabitants.

Southern leader 'Ali Salim al-Bid broadcast an appeal on television late Monday for the United Nations, the Arab League and the rest of the international community to "stop the savage bombardments on Aden and its vital installations, which have killed and wounded hundreds".

He also asked Arab and friendly countries to recognise the breakaway Yemen Democratic Republic (YDR), declared by the south on May 21 but not yet recognised by any country.

Al-Bid's appeal followed the failure of UN special envoy Lakhdar Brahimi to broker a ceasefire in the war. Brahimi left Cairo on Monday after the collapse of talks with northern and southern delegations there on Sunday.

Al-Bid pleaded for a "total (northern) retreat from the international frontiers of the YDR and demanded "damages from the Sanaa regime for destruction caused by its aggression".

He also asked for direct international food and medical aid for people living in parts of south Yemen occupied by northern troops.

The southern chief, who is based in the eastern port of al-Mukalla, also published a decree on Tuesday announcing compensation for families of the victims.

Relatives of those killed would receive 50,000 riyals while wounded would be given 25,000. A dollar is officially worth 12 riyals, but trades on the black market at almost 80 riyals.

War broke out between northern and southern forces on May 5 after four years of troubled union between the former North and South Yemens.

Mocha Power Station Fire 'Under Control'

JN2106055794 Sanaa Yemeni Republic Radio Network in Arabic 0430 GMT 21 Jun 94

[Text] Last night, the fire at the Mocha power station fuel tanks was brought under control. The power station was the target of a treacherous, cowardly raid by the treasonous, agent secessionist gang's aircraft. Fire and security men exerted great and continuous efforts for 26 hours with unparalleled zeal and vigor to save this important, vital installation, which was built with the blood and sweat of our militant Yemeni people. A vile clique from the secessionist, apostate gang is trying to destroy such installations, in keeping with its ignoble habit of sowing death and destroying economic and vital installations.

The brother Ta'izz governor directly supervised the progress of rescuing and evacuating the dead and wounded workers, children, and women to hospitals. The brother governor also directly supervised the fire fighting process until the fire was brought under control, with the support of God and the efforts of the efficient fire and security men.

'Popular Resistance' Ambushes Military Vehicle

EA2006211594 Aden Democratic Republic of Yemen Radio Network in Arabic 1800 GMT 20 Jun 94

[Text] A group of the heroes of the popular resistance in the Abyan Governorate laid an ambush for the aggressive invaders along the road from (Am'ayn) to al-Urqub. They succeeded in destroying a military bus and killing all the soldiers in it. This daring operation, carried out by our noble heroes from the sons of the dauntless Abyan Governorate, came in the wake of the spread of the popular resistance in all the areas of the Abyan Governorate and in every area under the invaders' occupation.

Romania Shipping Weapons to Sanaa Via Turkey

NC2106081994 Cairo MENA in Arabic 0635 GMT 21 Jun 94

[Text] Abu Dhabi, 21 Jun (MENA)—Citing high-ranking Turkish sources, AL-ITTIHAD newspaper today states that weapons have been shipped to north Yemen from Romania since early June. Giant Russian Ilyushin 76 cargo planes carry the weapons via (?Utabani) airport in Bucharest and cross Turkish airspace twice a day, going to Yemen at night and returning empty the next day.

According to the sources, the Romanian flights had obtained permission to transport vegetables across Turkish airspace. This has been verified through technological methods by air control units.

Since no ban has been imposed on weapons shipments to Yemen, Turkey cannot take any measures to interrupt these flights, the sources said.

In another development, AL-ITTIHAD has learned from sources in Cairo that one of the formulas put forward during the meeting in Cairo between the UN secretary general's envoy Lakhdar Brahimi and a north Yemeni delegation was to set up an Arab and Islamic force to supervise the cease-fire under UN auspices. The north Yemeni delegation did not respond to the proposal, requesting to refer it to the government, while the chairman of the southern delegation welcomed it.

The paper adds that Brahimi promised to provide UN funds for these troops to give them international status and make the proposal acceptable to all parties concerned.

Iranian Ambassador Confers With al-Ahmar

LD2006123694 Tehran IRNA in English 1228 GMT 20 Jun 94

[Text] Abu Dhabi, June 20, IRNA—Tehran-Sanaa cooperation, further promotion of ties between the two countries and the Yemeni internal situation were reviewed Sunday in a meeting in Sanaa between the Iranian ambassador to Yemen Mohammad Jalal Firuz-Nia and the Yemeni speaker of the Consultative Assembly 'Abdallah al-Ahmar.

In this meeting Firuz-Nia also explored ways to increase parliamentary cooperation between the two countries and delivered a message from Iranian Majlis Speaker Hojjat ol-Eslam 'Ali Akbar Nateq-Nuri to al-Ahmar inviting Yemeni parliamentary delegation to visit Tehran.

Changes To Oil Pipeline Accord With Turkey Rejected

JN1806105794 Baghdad INA in English 0811 GMT 18 Jun 94

[Text] Vienna, June 18 (INA)—Iraq's Oil Minister, Dr. Safa' Hadi Jawad, has reiterated Iraq's rejection of new conditions or changes on the Iraqi-Turkish accord to reoperate the Iraqi oil pipeline crossing the Turkish territories for cleaning and repairing it.

In a press statement here on Friday [17 June], Dr. Jawad said that this topic was directly pertaining to the Iraqi and Turkish sides. Therefore, Turkey should begin implementing the accord without taking permission from the Security Council.

The minister pointed out that both Iraq and Turkey had agreed to use the revenues to settle part of Iraq's debts to Turkey and the other part to purchase foodstuffs, baby milk and medicine from Turkey.

Parliamentary Talks With Yemeni Delegation Begin

JN2006151894 Baghdad INA in Arabic 1355 GMT 20 Jun 94

[Text] Baghdad, 20 Jun (INA)—Official talks between the Iraqi National Assembly and the Yemeni House of Representatives began here today. The Iraqi side to the talks was led by Safa' Salih al-'Umar, chairman of the Arab and International Relations Committee, whereas the Yemeni side was led by House Member Muhammad 'Abdallah al-Kibsi.

The heads of the two sides reviewed Arab and international developments, particularly the situation in fraternal Yemen in light of the continued imperialist-Zionist conspiracy that is targeting Yemen's unity.

Talks also dealt with ways to coordinate cooperation between the Iraqi National Assembly and the Yemeni House of Representatives in the parliamentary and political fields in a way that will serve both fraternal peoples and benefit the Arab nation in various fields.

France's Juppe Stresses Support for Kurds

NC1906171194 (Clandestine) Voice of the People of Kurdistan in Arabic 1600 GMT 19 Jun 94

[Text] Brother Jalal Talabani, secretary general of the Patriotic Union of Kurdistan, has received an important message from French Minister of Foreign Affairs Alain Juppe. Juppe stressed France's determination to support the Kurdish people in their fair struggle for democracy and legitimate rights within the framework of Iraqi national unity and implementing Security Council Resolution 688, which was originally proposed by France. He also noted that he now has better understanding of the Kurdish cause after reading the documents that Talabani submitted to him during their meeting in Paris in April.

French Strategic Institute Delegation Pays Visit

Director Confers With Tariq 'Aziz

JN1706120594 Baghdad INA in English 1030 GMT 17 Jun 94

[Text] Baghdad, June 16 (INA) [dateline as received]—Deputy Prime Minister Mr. Tariq 'Aziz today received Pascal Jaquino, director of the French Strategic Diplomatic Institute, and the delegation accompanying him.

The meeting was attended by director of the External Relations Office at the Arab Ba'th Socialist Party.

The delegation was also received today by Mr. Sa'di Mahdi Salih, speaker of the National Assembly, who briefed the delegation members on the passive impacts of the ongoing economic embargo in violation of international laws and charters.

Mr. Jaquino is accompanied by a delegation from the Sorbonne to get familiarized with the negative impact of the embargo imposed on the Iraqi people.

[At 1045 GMT on 17 June Baghdad INA in English carried the following related report: Mr. Pascal Jaquino, director of the French Strategic Institute, expressed optimism over resuming cultural relations between Iraq and France.

Mr. Jaquino, now on a visit to Iraq, told INA the visit is after getting acquainted with impacts of the embargo on the people of Iraq and convey that to the French public opinion which is misled by false Western media propaganda and reports.

He added the reconstruction process confirmed the Iraqi people's resolve to surmount crises and maintain a march toward the future.]

Al-Sahhaf Receives Delegates

JN1706174894 Baghdad INA in Arabic 1725 GMT 17 Jun 94

[Text] Baghdad, 17 Jun (INA)—Foreign Minister Muhammad Sa'id al-Sahhaf today received Mr. Pascal Jaquino, director of the French Strategic Diplomatic Institute, and his delegation. They discussed relations between Iraq and France and France's potential contribution to lifting the sanctions. Mr. Jaquino said Iraq deserved support and called for the facts of its positions to be explained.

They also considered possible cooperation between the Institute of Foreign Service at the Iraqi Foreign Ministry and the French Strategic Diplomatic Institute.

French Businessmen Arrive on Four-Day Visit

JN2006160694 Baghdad INA in Arabic 1535 GMT 20 Jun 94

[Text] Baghdad, 20 Jun (INA)—A delegation of French businessmen arrived in Baghdad today on a four-day visit to Iraq.

The delegation, representing 28 French trade and industrial firms, will hold meetings with Iraqi officials on ways to promote Iraqi-French cooperation and relations in the economic and trade fields.

It is worth noting that the national union of French employers held an expanded meeting in Paris late last month to discuss Iraqi-French trade and economic relations as well as the need to activate and promote them in a way that will serve the interest of both peoples.

Ba'th Party Official Meets Group

JN2006173594 Baghdad INA in Arabic 1630 GMT 20 Jun 94

[Text] Baghdad, 20 Jun (INA)—Dr. 'Abd-al-Razzaq al-Hashimi, head of the Foreign Relations Office in the Iraq Command of the Arab Socialist Ba'th Party and head of the Iraqi-French Friendship Society, today met with the delegation of French businessmen currently visiting Iraq.

Al-Hashimi reviewed Iraqi-French relations and the need to return them to normal in a way that will serve the peoples of both friendly countries. He also pointed to the repercussions of the continued unfair blockade imposed on the Iraqi people. This blockade, he added, is a flagrant breach and a blatant violation of all international laws, charters, and norms.

Al-Hashimi urged the French firms to make an effective move in order to end the Iraqi people's suffering and promote bilateral economic and trade relations.

The French delegation asserted that its visit to Iraq aims to discuss the Iraqi-French trade and economic relations and promote them by all means.

MIO Director Receives Businessmen

JN2006180094 Baghdad INA in Arabic 1707 GMT 20 Jun 94

[Text] Baghdad, 20 Jun (INA)—'Amir Muhammad Rashid, director of the Military Industrialization Organization [MIO], today met with a delegation of French businessmen representing 28 French firms dealing with various industrial, oil, transport, communications, and health fields.

During the meeting, they reviewed Iraqi-French relations with a view to activating civil industries. The French firms showed readiness to seriously contribute to enhancing bilateral relations and to effectively participate in various developmental projects and technical industries, including the pharmaceutical and food industries, as well as the manufacture of cars and agricultural equipment and machines, and petrochemical industries, in addition to the iron, steel, and aluminum industries and other industries in a way that will enhance the friendly relations and bolster the common interests of both Iraq and the French firms.

The delegation's visit is part of a French move under the current circumstances designed to bolster these firms' contributions to the Iraqi civil industries. The under secretary of the Ministry of Industry and Minerals attended the meeting.

Yugoslav Delegation Meets With Ministers

JN1806151394 Baghdad INA in Arabic 1428 GMT 18 Jun 94

[Text] Baghdad, 18 Jun (INA)—Today, Planning Minister Samal Majid Faraj met with Milord Unkovic, minister of external economic relations and the head of the Yugoslav side on the Joint Economic Iraqi-Yugoslav Committee, and his delegation. The two sides discussed the scope of economic and developmental cooperation and ways to invigorate the joint committee in the best interests of the two countries. The meeting was attended by Yugoslavia's charge d'affaires in Baghdad and a number of Yugoslav company managers.

Dr. Unkovic also met with Dr. Ahmad Murtada Ahmad, minister of transport and communications. They discussed cooperation in transportation and communications, with a special emphasis on the areas of railroads and the telephone.

The Yugoslav delegates condemned the sanctions. They said they are prepared to join in development ventures in Iraq.

Holds Talks With Ramadan

LD1806171694 Belgrade TANJUG Domestic Service in Serbo-Croatian 1632 GMT 18 Jun 94

[Excerpt] Baghdad, 18 Jun (TANJUG)—Taha Yasin Ramadan, vice president and deputy prime minister of Iraq, held talks in Baghdad today with Milorad Unkovic, minister for economic relations and chairman of the Yugoslav side of the Yugoslav-Iraqi mixed committee for economic and technical cooperation.

Ramadan and Unkovic devoted special attention to the activities of the Non-Aligned Movement, stressing that the movement is still active in the new international conditions, but that it must return to its original principles. [passage omitted]

Transport Minister, Unkovic Hold Talks

LD1806182094 Belgrade TANJUG Domestic Service in Serbo-Croatian 1748 GMT 18 Jun 94

[Text] Baghdad, 18 Jun (TANJUG)—Milorad Unkovic, the federal Yugoslav minister for economic relations and

president of part of the Yugoslav-Iraqi joint committee, today held talks with Ahmad Murtada Ahmad Khalil, the Iraqi minister of transport and communications.

They described their cooperation in positive terms, and both sides expressed readiness for further talks on the building of transport infrastructure in Iraq.

They also discussed the imports of Yugoslav equipment, material, and spare parts in the sphere of transport and telecommunications when the UN embargoes, currently imposed on both countries, are lifted.

Finance Minister Meets With Unkovic

JN2006113494 Baghdad INA in Arabic 1100 GMT 20 Jun 94

[Text] Baghdad, 20 Jun (INA)—Finance Minister Ahmad Husayn Khudayyir met today with Milorad Unkovic, Yugoslav federal minister for economic relations with foreign countries and representative of the Yugoslav side to the joint Iraqi-Yugoslav committee.

During the meeting, they discussed ways to enhance cooperation between the two countries in economic fields.

Former Ministers Banned From Engaging in Trade

JN1806114394 Baghdad Republic of Iraq Radio Network in Arabic 1030 GMT 18 Jun 94

["Text" of Revolution Command Council, RCC, Decree No. 67 issued on 13 June 1994]

[Text] In the name of God, the merciful, the compassionate.

The Republic of Iraq
The Revolution Command Council [RCC] Decree No. 67
Dated 4 Muharram 1415 Hegira, corresponding to 13 June 1994
Decree: In accordance with the provisions enshrined in Paragraph A of Article 42 of the Constitution, the RCC has decided the following:

1. Former ministers and former officials enjoying the rank of a minister shall be banned from performing the following activities until further notice:

A. The launching of mixed, joint-stock, or private firms.
B. Engaging in business and trade.
C. The launching of all kinds of consulting bureaus.
D. Working as chairmen or members of the boards of directors of the aforementioned firms.
E. Working as authorized directors of the aforementioned firms.

2. Former officials enjoying special grades, former directors general, as well as former Armed Forces and Internal Security officers shall be banned from performing the activities enshrined in this decree for five years as of the date they abandon their official posts.

3. This decree shall be published in the official gazette. The concerned agencies shall see to its implementation.

[Signed] Saddam Husayn, RCC chairman

Saddam Chairs Meeting on Economic Issues

JN1406061294 Baghdad INA in Arabic 2025 GMT 13 Jun 94

[Text] Baghdad, 13 Jun (INA)—President Saddam Husayn today chaired a Cabinet meeting to discuss the general economic policy and the specific trade and economic issues that were discussed in the meeting which the president had this morning with a number of ministers and specialists in trade and industry affairs. Following a lengthy discussion, the Cabinet took the necessary measures in terms of legislation and execution.

Leader President Saddam Husayn ordered an increase in the purchase price of wheat and barley for the current season, retroactively. The price for one tonne of first-class wheat will be increased from 15,000 dinars per tonne to 35,000 dinars, and the price for barley will be increased from 7,500 dinars per tonne to 20,000 dinars.

Discussion of other subjects will continue in future meetings.

Finance Minister Explains Recent Pay Increases

JN1406140694 Baghdad Republic of Iraq Radio Network in Arabic 1030 GMT 14 Jun 94

[Excerpts] Finance Minister Ahmad Husayn has said that the noble gesture of leader President Saddam Husayn, may God preserve him, to improve the state employees' standard of living is part of a series of noble gestures with which the leader of the people and inciter of their potential has accustomed us. [passage omitted]

He explained: To let figures speak for themselves, this noble gesture, at its minimum, will grant the bachelor state employee 450 dinars per month if he works in Baghdad or the provincial capitals, and 550 dinars if he works outside Baghdad and the provincial capitals. At its maximum, this gesture will provide a married state employee with five children an income increase of 750 dinars if he works in Baghdad or the provincial capitals, and 850 dinars if he works outside Baghdad and the provincial capitals. Between these two limits, the income increases for those covered by the noble gesture depends on the number of dependent children.

The minister noted: If we take into consideration the nature of the Iraqi family, which is often an extended family, this may result in having more than one family member covered by the gesture. Supposing that a family consists of a husband, a wife, and three children all of whom are state employees covered by the leader president's gesture, this family will have a monthly income

increase of 2,300 dinars if they work in Baghdad or the provincial capitals, and 2,800 dinars if they work outside Baghdad and the provincial capitals. [passage omitted]

The finance minister explained that the leader president's generous gesture will add to the state treasury a monthly financial obligation of 1.25 billion dinars, or an annual obligation of 15 billion dinars. Therefore, he noted, this gesture expresses the leader president's determination to achieve prosperity and happiness for the people under the existing hard economic circumstances.

Naturally, he added, in view of their absolute confidence in the leader president's command of the march of jihad and reconstruction under the blockade and in his generous gestures which aim at improving the general living standards of the entire population, those covered by the gesture should rise to national responsibility and improve their performance in all fields of work. They should double their efforts to increase production and provide the best services for citizens to ease the burdens of the unfair blockade.

Rabin Ready To Meet Husayn 'Anytime, Anywhere'

TA2106053294 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 0400 GMT 21 Jun 94

[Text] Prime Minister Yitzhaq Rabin said that during yesterday's attack in the security zone, Hizballah fighters fired 12 Sagger missiles at an IDF [Israel Defense Forces] convoy, a missile volley unprecedented in the history of the clashes with the Hizballah. The prime minister added that on average, five clashes occur every week in south Lebanon; however, since these incidents generally result in no casualties they are not reported.

Prime Minister Rabin said he would be happy to meet Jordan's King Husayn and Jordanian officials anytime, anywhere. Our political correspondent Shlomo Raz reports that the prime minister was responding to King Husayn's assertion that the time for a public meeting between himself and Israeli leaders was drawing near. King Husayn is currently visiting the United States and will meet President Clinton on 23 June to discuss the promotion of the peace process.

[Tel Aviv MA'ARIV in Hebrew on 21 June in a pool report on pages 1, 2 notes that "officials at the prime minister's bureau yesterday clarified that the exchange of declarations between King Husayn and Prime Minister Rabin was not a smokescreen to conceal contacts already under way to hold a meeting in the near future. Nevertheless, political sources expressed the assessment that the declarations may lead to a process similar to the one which accompanied Egyptian President al-Sadat's trip to Jerusalem in 1977 and resulted in the first public meeting between Israeli and Jordanian officials—including Husayn and Rabin—in the near future.

"Meanwhile, political sources in Jerusalem yesterday reported that Jordan was signalling its readiness to permit limited numbers of Israeli tourists to enter Jordan soon." MA'ARIV adds that "Officials in Jerusalem yesterday asserted that Jordan had not been frightened by Syria's anger over Amman's progress in the negotiations with Israel, and apparently intended to implement various aspects of normalization with Israel over the coming months."]

The prime minister met with the Labor Knesset faction yesterday and discussed the government's achievements over the past two years. At the meeting, the prime minister said that the state of calm in the Gaza Strip and the drop in terrorism influenced the national mood more than any debate at the Labor party's Central Committee. Rabin described the implementation of the agreement with the Palestinians as not bad. Commenting on the difficulties in the negotiations with the Syrians, the prime minister stressed that he was not pessimistic and noted that meetings with Jordanian officials would take place next month along the border. These political developments, Rabin said, calms the security situation.

The prime minister asserted that the Labor party's rule would be judged in three fields: infrastructure, education, and the scope of unemployment. As for Hayim Ramon and his associates, Yitzhaq Rabin said that it was inconceivable for them to hold two passports. Although they were not members of the party they remained members of its Knesset faction. At the same time, the prime minister was not proposing to expel them from the Knesset faction. Our correspondent Yo'el Nir reports that the atmosphere at the meeting was relaxed and many of the faction members said that following last week's uproar, the party should start putting its house in order. The debate on the party's condition was put off until tomorrow.

Peres Welcomes Husayn Statements

TA2106084794 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 0800 GMT 21 Jun 94

[Text] Foreign Minister Shim'on Peres has welcomed King Husayn's statements regarding his hopes to meet publicly with Israeli leaders in the near future. In a speech before the United Jewish Appeal in Jerusalem, the foreign minister said that the differences between Jordan and Israel were not of the kind that could not be resolved quickly.

[Tel Aviv IDF Radio in Hebrew at 0830 GMT on 21 June reports that "Foreign Minister Peres said that Jordan would have to sever its linkage with Syria in the negotiations with Israel. This linkage was damaging to both parties, he noted."]

As for Yasir 'Arafat's impending visit to the territories, Foreign Minister Peres said that it was up to the PLO chairman to decide the date of his visit, noting that 'Arafat could arrive whenever he chose. This was reported by our correspondent Steve Linde.

Rabin Says Gap With Syria Large, Calls For Talks

TA2106104794 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in English 1000 GMT 21 Jun 94

[Text] Prime Minister Yitzhaq Rabin says the gap between the positions of Israel and Syria is very large. But, speaking to reporters at an army camp on the Golan Heights this morning, Rabin called on Damascus to open direct, high-level negotiations with Israel.

[Begin recording] [Rabin] The time has arrived that Syria will start to realize that the best way to negotiate peace with Israel is to sit face to face on higher levels than it was done till now, and to talk in a serious way how to reach peace between our two countries.

[Unidentified correspondent] When do you expect the peace talks to resume with Syria face to face?

[Rabin] As you know, at this stage it is conducted through the visits of the secretary of state. We are ready to continue in the way that the United States serves as

go-between, hopefully to create a basis that will bring about meetings on higher levels between Syria and Israel. I cannot see how a real agreement or peace treaty can be reached without a certain stage of meetings on the higher levels than it is today.

[Correspondent] Mr. Rabin, Mr. Christopher is not coming to the Middle East at this time. What could bring the sides back to the table?

[Rabin] I cannot speak in the name of the secretary of state but I believe that he will come. If it is not going to happen in June, it will happen in July. [end recording]

Rabin Said To Have Made Peace Low Priority

TA1706111994 Tel Aviv HATZOFE in Hebrew 17 Jun 94 pp 1, 2

[Report by Hagay Huberman]

[Text] Prime Minister Yitzhaq Rabin has pushed the peace issue down low in his order of priorities and he is now focusing much more on social issues, a senior government official close to the prime minister told HATZOFE.

That is why the prime minister decided to put himself in charge of the small team negotiating with Ramon's Ram faction in the Histadrut, together with 'Uzi Bar'am and Hayim Haberfeld.

According to the same source, Rabin feels that by evacuating the Gaza Strip —which in practice is not in our hands despite the erroneous "autonomy" title—he has won the most points he can gain in public support on that issue—and he must now slow down on peace if he does not want to lose the "points" he has won.

"Rabin is starting to tire of the exhausting negotiations with the PLO and has decided at this stage to hold up the process until the situation in Jericho and Gaza stabilizes. Rabin's current agenda is devoted to dealing with issues like the Histadrut and its sick fund; the economic situation; the cost-of-living index; housing, and other social issues."

According to the same source, Rabin apparently fears that poor handling of those issues will lose the next elections for Labor even if he can point to political successes, therefore his day is mainly devoted to social issues. The Prime Minister's Office feels that due to 'Arafat's pronouncements, public support for an ongoing political move, including the transfer of all the areas of Judaea, Samaria, and the Gaza Strip to the Palestinians, is much lower than for leaving the Gaza Strip, which most Israelis, even those identified with the right wing, supported.

Rabin, Peres To End Contacts With 'Arafat Adviser

TA2106110694 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 1000 GMT 21 Jun 94

[Text] Prime Minister Yitzhaq Rabin and Foreign Minister Shim'on Peres have instructed their bureau officials and aides to cease all working contacts with Dr. Ahmad al-Tibi, who is described as PLO Chairman Yasir 'Arafat's adviser.

The instructions came in the wake of a legal opinion regarding al-Tibi's status as an Israeli citizen. This was reported by our political correspondent Shlomo Raz.

Peres Comments on Sha'th Not Visiting Jerusalem

TA2006161094 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in English 1500 GMT 20 Jun 94

[Text] Foreign Minister Shim'on Peres has acknowledged it was Israel's objection that led senior PLO official Nabil Sha'th to put off his visit to Jerusalem. Appearing before the Knesset Foreign Affairs and Defense Committee, Peres said Israel would not negotiate with the Palestinians on the next stage until it was sure that the Gaza-Jericho arrangement is working. As David Ze'ev reports from the Knesset, the meeting was dominated by a bitter verbal clash between the foreign minister and the Likud's Beni Begin.

[Begin recording] [Ze'ev] The talk at the Foreign Affairs and Defense Committee was not infighting within Labor, but a bitter confrontation between Foreign Minister Shim'on Peres and Likud committee member Beni Begin. On the heels of the recent disclosure of the letter written by the foreign minister on Palestinian rights in East Jerusalem, Begin said it was not the only time Peres had hidden the facts, and the Likud Knesset member accused the foreign minister of purposely deceiving the Knesset. Peres retorted: First you carry out terrorism in the Knesset plenum, now you want to do it in the committee. Begin called Peres a big talker. Peres later called Begin a professional slanderer. And so the personal insults went on and on. A Knesset official at the closed meeting who relayed the dialogue said most committee members were in a state of shock and that Foreign Minister Peres commented at the end of the meeting that he was shocked, saying this kind of meeting is unprecedented.

On more mundane affairs, Peres acknowledged to reporters later that Israel's objection was the reason senior PLO official Nabil Sha'th was not visiting Jerusalem though Peres would not elaborate on whether Israel would stop Chairman Yasir 'Arafat from coming to the city.

[Peres] I am content with the decision of Nabil Sha'th. We were not approached by 'Arafat, so there is no need to take any steps.

[Ze'ev] Peres confirmed that Israel wants to ensure that the Gaza-Jericho arrangement with the Palestinians is working first before negotiations start on the next stage. On Syria, the foreign minister said the delay of the trip to the region by U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher did not mean that the negotiations have stopped or failed.

[Peres] I think that the secretary feels that he should have more meat in his basket from the Syrian side before he makes the next move, so it takes another few weeks, but by no means can one conclude that the negotiations have stopped or failed.

[Ze'ev] They go on, he said. In every negotiation you have the ups and downs, and even interruptions. [end recording]

Officials Visit Allenby Bridge, Make Comments

TA2006114694 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 0900 GMT 20 Jun 94

[Text] Israel will permit the Palestinian policemen who are slated to serve on the Allenby Bridge and at the Rafah border terminals to assume their posts as early as next week if they are prepared. Major General Dani Rothschild, the coordinator of activities in the territories, made this statement this morning during a visit to the Allenby Bridge. Rothschild's deputy Arye Ramot clarified, however, that several more weeks are necessary for to complete the technical arrangements for the joint work with the Palestinian representatives at the border terminals. Among other things involved is the installation of sophisticated electronic equipment to examine travelers' luggage. This work will be completed in mid-July.

Our correspondent Ron Nesi'el notes that today, Transportation Minister Yisra'el Qeysar visited the Allenby Bridge, which will be transferred to the jurisdiction of the Israel Airports Authority in approximately four months. Qeysar announced that his ministry will invest approximately 30 million shekels in the Allenby and Rafah terminals in order to make them more modern and efficient.

[Tel Aviv IDF Radio in Hebrew at 1000 GMT on 20 June carries a report by Avi Lifshitz on Qeysar's visit to the Allenby Bridge, adding that "Minister Qeysar said Jordan wants Israel to allow its planes to fly across Israeli airspace to Europe. Minister Qeysar said that as soon as such an official request arrives, Israel will give it favorable consideration and will probably accept it."]

IDF Spokesman on Release of Palestinian Prisoners

TA1906055994 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in English 0400 GMT 19 Jun 94

[Text] The Army says 1,?00 Palestinian prisoners will remain in Israeli jails because they would not sign a declaration renouncing violence and terrorism. The IDF [Israel Defense Forces] spokesman said Israel has released about 3,400 prisoners, adding that a further 100 Palestinian criminals chose to stay in Israeli prisons rather than be transferred to jails in the Gaza Strip.

Yasin Release Said Dependent on Disavowal of Terror

TA2006065894 Tel Aviv IDF Radio in Hebrew 0500 GMT 20 Jun 94

[Text] Israel is willing to release Hamas [Islamic Resistance Movement] leader Ahmad Yasin from prison if he signs the standard statement saying that he knows that he is being released in the framework of the Israel-PLO agreement and that he undertakes to refrain from any acts of terrorism. The paralyzed and blind Yasin, however, refuses to sign this statement and will consequently remain incarcerated in Israel. Our military affairs correspondent Yariv Ben-Yehuda reports:

[Begin Ben-Yehuda recording] The issue of Hamas leader Shaykh Ahmad Yasin's release was reviewed once more several weeks ago, and again it was decided not to release him. Israel is making Yasin's release conditional on his signing the statement all released Palestinian prisoners must sign on refraining from acts of or support for terrorism. This was divulged by a security source. So far, Yasin has refused to sign such a statement. Several Palestinian elements, some of them official, recently submitted requests for the release of Yasin, who has been imprisoned in Israel since 1988. All the requests were reviewed, but as long as Yasin refuses to sign the statement, he will remain imprisoned. The security source said Israel does not want Yasin to die in an Israeli prison, because this could have an impact on Hamas activity and could result in a wave of violence by other organizations as well. The state of Yasin's health, however, has not changed. As a result of a childhood disease, he is paralyzed throughout almost all of his body, but there has been no serious deterioration in his condition. [end recording]

Peres Urges All To Act 'Properly' in Lebanon

TA2106053594 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in English 0400 GMT 21 Jun 94

[Text] Reacting to the escalation of fighting in south Lebanon, Foreign Minister Shim'on Peres called on all parties, including Syria, to try and stabilize the situation. He was speaking to No'omi Segal at a reception in Jerusalem.

[Begin Peres recording] Well, it happened before we started the negotiations. From time to time there were confrontations in Lebanon. It is not an entirely new phenomenon. But I hope that the responsible parties will act properly, including the Syrian party, to stop it. [end recording]

Lubrani: Hizballah Attack Part of 'Ongoing Struggle'

TA2106090694 Tel Aviv IDF Radio in Hebrew 0500 GMT 21 Jun 94

[Telephone interview with Uri Lubrani, the coordinator of government activities in Lebanon, by Ya'el Dan and Ya'aqov Eylon on 21 June, place not given—recorded]

[Text] [Dan] Earlier this morning, we spoke with Uri Lubrani, the coordinator of government activities in Lebanon. In our first question we noted that ever since Mustafa al-Dirani's abduction [on 21 May], tension and anxiety have prevailed throughout Israel's northern settlements. Despite fear of a Hizballah retaliation or terrorist attack, things had been relatively quiet. We asked Lubrani whether yesterday's attack was the reprisal everyone had feared.

[Lubrani] I think this operation should be viewed as part of our ongoing struggle in the security zone. The IDF [Israel Defense Forces] soldiers often travel in convoys. Although this was an especially serious attack it definitely falls within the framework of regular occurrences. Regrettably, however, we paid a heavy price this time.

[Eylon] How would you define this routine, Mr. Lubrani? Prime Minister Rabin also said yesterday that there had been no exacerbation along the northern border. What are the parameters?

[Lubrani] There are no clear lines. Sometimes, there is a steep rise in activity while other periods are more quiet. As you just mentioned, we recently experienced a quiet period but nothing lasts forever, there is constant activity and something happens every night. Some incidents are so low-level that they are not worth reporting, but something happens every night.

[Dan] Does such a painful attack demand a retaliation on our part?

[Lubrani] That is something else entirely which involves considerations unrelated to the scope of yesterday's incident. One must definitely consider taking steps following such an attack. However, as I said earlier such convoys are commonplace and often exposed to attack. This could happen again today. To my regret, this particular attack must be seen within the context of daily activity.

[Dan] It appears that by using the somewhat outdated sagger missiles, the terrorists save themselves the trouble of confronting our soldiers head on. Do we have a suitable riposte for these missiles?

[Lubrani] We have responded by changing our tactics in the north; however, the sagger missiles undoubtedly constitute a deadly weapon.

[Dan] Mr. Lubrani, will we have to accept this kind of status quo in the near future?

[Lubrani] Yes, that is my impression. It is part of our continuing struggle until conditions are ripe for reaching security arrangements with Lebanon.

[Dan] Thank you, Uri Lubrani.

MIA's From 1982 Lebanese Battle Said Alive

TA1906193894 Jerusalem Israel Television Channel 1 Network in Hebrew 1700 GMT 19 Jun 94

[Excerpts] The parents of the three MIA's from the al-Sultan Ya'qub battle in Lebanon in 1982 claim that their sons are alive and held by Lebanese elements in the Lebanese al-Biqa'. They say they are basing their claim on new information they received from eyewitnesses. [passage omitted]

Following the al-Sultan Ya'qub battle, a U.S. television team photographed a Syrian tank carrying what seemed to be three Israeli soldiers. Today the parents disclose that both they and the Israeli Government possess information that their sons are safe and sound. [passage omitted]

Security elements reemphasized today that the Israeli Government does not spare any effort to obtain new information about IDF [Israel Defense Forces] MIA.

Four Iraqi Infiltrators Sent to Lebanon

TA1506172694 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 1400 GMT 15 Jun 94

[Text] Four Iraqi citizens who over a month ago infiltrated from Jordan to Israel and asked for political asylum, were sent off by IDF [Israel Defense Forces] soldiers into Lebanese territory this afternoon. UNIFIL [UN Interim Force in Lebanon] Spokesman Timor Goksel told our correspondent in the north Yo'av Aviv that the IDF soldiers brought the four Iraqis, whose hands were tied, up to the border, untied them, and the four marched northward to a UNIFIL post. They have been held in prison since they crossed the border into Israel, and have now been handed over to Lebanon.

Arms Embargo Against South Africa Officially Lifted

MB1906164094 Johannesburg Radio South Africa Network in English 1600 GMT 19 Jun 94

[Text] Israel has become the first country to officially lift its arms embargo against South Africa. This follows the United Nations Security Council's resolution last month to cancel the military embargo and other restrictions it had imposed in the past. There had been speculation that the two countries were cooperating on nuclear weapons and ballistic missile research until Israel stopped signing arms contracts with South Africa in 1987.

Sheves Views Relations With Ministers

TA1706102594 Tel Aviv HA'ARETZ in Hebrew 16 Jun 94 p B2

[Interview with Shim'on Sheves, director general of the Prime Minister's Office, by Dalya Shehori; place and date not given]

[Text] [Shehori] People say you tried to fashion the prime minister's bureau after the White House team model.

[Sheves] I would not call it "the White House team model," but I have definitely been trying to create a structure that will fit the direct election of the prime minister and the modus operandi of a prime minister elected in such elections. I have learned a lot from my meetings, talks, and friendships with people in the White House and the State Department. Once a year I meet U.S. administration officials, and next month I will be meeting the President's advisers and State Department officials. What I am particularly interested in learning from them is how to implement the platform the President presented in the election campaign.

[Shehori] Some structures have not been successful, such as the follow-up team which collapsed.

[Sheves] Not only did it not collapse, but it became stronger and its standing with the government ministries is steadfast. It consists of two branches: One follows up on the prime minister's decisions, which means working with the ministries on preeminent issues, such as monitoring the budgetary expenditures of each ministry. This work is done by one person, who once a month submits a report to the prime minister on the activities of all the ministries. A second team monitors how budgets are spent on interministerial activities. All in all we are talking about four employees. The second branch deals with the implementation of administrative decisions and the removal of red tape on issues such as road paving, construction, housing, land marketing, and the use of budgets in the Arab, Bedouin, and Druze sectors. There is yet another team, the national projects team headed by Yehezqel Har- Melekh, which deals with the transfer of industrial plants from the center of the country to development areas, the reclassification of settlement areas, and localized treatment of problematic areas.

[Shehori] Is your goal to make the Prime Minister's Office a super ministry?

[Sheves] I have never talked about a super ministry, but about an office liaising between all the government ministries. One of my sorriest conclusions is that the government ministries are a confederation of offices which require coordination on almost every subject.

[Shehori] Do you enjoy the full cooperation of all the ministries?

[Sheves] Most of them. From the Finance Ministry I only get partial cooperation.

[Shehori] Why?

[Sheves] Because the finance minister and I have different personalities and we have different views about many issues.

[Shehori] If there is one common denominator to the departure of several officials from the prime minister's bureau, this seems to be their frustration over the compartmentalization and the lack of access to sources of information.

[Sheves] Give me one example.

[Shehori] Elyaqim Rubinstein, who was not let in on the Oslo process.

[Sheves] So what? He was not the only one who did not know. Many cabinet ministers did not know either. Rabin and Peres wanted only a minimum number of people to know the details so that the negotiations could end successfully. I think it was the right decision.

Gad Ben-Ari did a good job and for the most part people were satisfied with it. After two years he decided to move to another job—head of the Jewish Agency delegation in the United States—which suited him and his family better. Eli Rubinstein sees his future in the legal field and decided to pursue a purely legal career as the legal adviser of the defense establishment, but at the same time he continues to head the delegation to the talks with Jordan and is doing an excellent political job. Jacques Neriya reached the conclusion that it would be best for him, both financially and in terms of promoting his personal career, if he became the head of the Histadrut labor federation's international affairs department. His was one of the most successful appointments in this office in the last two years.

[Shehori] Are there plans to fill the job left vacant by Hayim Asad as strategic adviser to the prime minister?

[Sheves] No. He had also been supposed to head the national security team, but this did not come about. He never dealt with this issue. His is the only appointment I feel was a failure. Hayim Asad was not the right man for the job, neither in terms of his qualifications nor on the personal level.

[Shehori] You have had confrontations with Ministers Ya'aqov Tzur, Avraham "Beiga" Shohat, and Binyamin "Fu'ad" Ben-Eli'ezer.

[Sheves] I have had no confrontations with Tzur and Fu'ad. Tzur promised to appoint a friend of ours, Bentzi Weiner, as director general of the Agriculture Ministry but he did not keep his promise. Tzur does not deny that he made such a promise, and I am no longer angry with him. I got angry in the way friends do, but our dispute ended in September 1992. We work closely together.

With Fu'ad I have had two professional, not personal, arguments. One was two years ago over the issue of highways and junctions and it all ended well, in a

friendly and matter-of-fact manner. Our second argument was over the fact that I submitted a serious, authoritative, responsible, and learned study about the rise in the price of apartments in Israel in the past six months. He did not appreciate this fact very much, and I understand him. At the same time, there is cooperation between us and together we worked out the draft resolution submitted to the cabinet. As for Beiga Shohat, the issue runs much deeper. I have a serious argument with him about priorities. I greatly appreciate the macro achievements in the Israeli economy. The problem is with the micro-strategic issues, such as tackling the problem of housing in a timely and firm manner.

[Shehori] Did you expect the prime minister to appoint you as a minister when Ramon quit?

[Sheves] I did not expect it and I do not think he could.

[Shehori] You had expectations in the political sphere, but in the end you have been left out of it.

[Sheves] I have not been neutralized at all in the political sphere, the prime minister includes me in everything. I do not play a functional role in the negotiations because I am not a member of any delegation. I have never wanted to be a member or head of any delegation. I know I am not qualified for such a job because I have no experience in this field and this is a very professional area. However, I have assisted and I continue to assist on many issues in the political sphere.

[Shehori] What are your aspirations?

[Sheves] I will not run in the primaries, I have no plans to be a politician, I do not want to be either a member of the Knesset or a cabinet minister. I want to serve Rabin as director general of the Prime Minister's Office and to be successful in my job. I will take it from here; I do not plan anything in advance. I never planned to be the director general of the Prime Minister's Office.

Sheves' Influence Over Rabin Questioned

TA1706095494 Tel Aviv HA'ARETZ in Hebrew 16 Jun 94 p B2

[Article by Dalya Shehori: "I Like Being Director General; I Want To Serve Rabin"]

[Text] As far as Shim'on Sheves is concerned, he is realizing the dreams and plans he brought to the prime minister's bureau when he became its director general, and he is pleased with a job well done. Others—ministers and public figures who maintain close ties with the prime minister's bureau—paint a different picture. Sheves established a team to monitor the implementation of the prime minister's and government's decisions, including the way budgets are used by the various ministries. According to him, the team has been operating, coordinating, and discharging its duties. Others say the follow-up team collapsed several months after its establishment. There is a considerable disparity between the versions.

While media descriptions have portrayed Sheves as a very strong man, whose proximity to Yitzhaq Rabin has put him in control of extensive information and of the fate of ministers and officials, it now transpires that ministers who had a falling-out with Sheves lost nothing of the access to or good ties with Rabin. Agriculture Minister Ya'aqov Tzur, Construction and Housing Minister Binyamin Ben-Eli'ezer, and Finance Minister Avraham Shohat enter the prime minister's bureau daily and meet with him whenever necessary. When Shohat presented the cabinet the Finance Ministry's plan dealing with unemployment, while an alternative plan drafted by strategic adviser Hayim Asa—who has meanwhile been fired—was submitted on behalf of Sheves, the cabinet endorsed Shohat's plan.

A cabinet minister said off the record: "I do not think he is powerful. He did not manage to really harm Beiga [Avraham] Shohat, perhaps just to smear him, and even that is too strong an expression. The bottom line is that Beiga sees Rabin and talks to him, while Sheves has been forced to withdraw his ideas. It was very obvious at a housing discussion (where Sheves proposed reverting to public construction and greater government involvement—DS)."

Officials close to Shohat say the finance minister sees his conflict with Sheves and Sheves' ability to harm him as some force majeure with which he has to live. Shohat finds solace in the fact that Rabin never comes out against him and in the prime minister's loyalty to him.

A man conversant with affairs at Rabin's bureau says that when Sheves arrived there, he had many grand schemes to establish a structure similar to that of the White House team, with himself at the top. "All doors leading to the bureau were repainted, many new signs were put up, a project follow-up team was set up, as were other bodies. But Sheves, a pugnacious man who suited Rabin's needs in the primaries and the election campaign, was unable to take charge of such a complex system. Every system he established collapsed, and decent members of the bureau staff admitted there was nothing for them to do there. What remains today is Rabin's skeleton headquarters: Military Secretary Dani Yatom, who liaises with the Mosad and the Shin Bet and arranges the prime minister's flights and receipt of cables; bureau chief Eytan Haber, who writes the prime minister's speeches and is on intimate terms with Rabin. Sheves is nonexistent. He still plays a political role, and as a man with street savvy, he understands the trends in the street, but he does not participate in security and political consultations."

Time has proven that 42-year-old Sheves often engages in power contests, in which he is defeated. In the words of one of the ministers: "He draws all his strength from Rabin. If he is separated from him, he will not be able to survive." When Sheves put his strength to a test by promoting Yuval Frenkel's candidacy for Labor party secretary general, the job was won by Nisim Zvili. Ya'aqov Tzur refused to accept Sheves' dictums

regarding appointments, but this never hurt his standing. Binyamin Ben-Eli'ezer did tell the government that the Construction Ministry's housing plan is coordinated with the prime minister's bureau, but for Ben-Eli'ezer this was apparently a one-time concession. Shohat has not deviated from his economic doctrine, and he continues to back Treasury officials.

It seems that Sheves' tests of power ultimately tarnished his image. He once said in a press interview that he must be believed when he says that he does not appoint people, but only recommends appointments to the prime minister occasionally. Then we thought he was acting humble, but today we can believe him.

The revolution Sheves brought about in the Prime Minister's Office and bureau—cutting down the number of advisers to the prime minister; making all other advisers administratively subordinate to the director general; creating new departments and liaison mechanisms between government ministers; improving services to the citizen—may have been ahead of its time. It would have been more suitable for a time when the prime minister is chosen in direct elections and his powers resemble those of the U.S. President. At the moment, the system does not work well, and only a handful of ministers come to the bureau to coordinate issues with Sheves. For his part, he concentrates his efforts on socioeconomic issues, including the reclassification of development areas and localized treatment of backward or problematic areas (including in the Arab sector), and gets praised for it.

Rabin did not interfere with the innovations Sheves made in the Prime Minister's Office. He does not need advisers any way, and except for substantive issues, what happens in the bureau does not interest him. Gradually the bureau began emptying of people and goals. Advisers and key officials, such as Cabinet Secretary Elyaqim Rubinstein, media adviser Gad Ben-Ari, and political adviser Jacques Neriya, quit recently. On the face of it, each of them quit for his own reasons. But, according to knowledgeable sources, most of these departures could have been avoided if these officials had had better access to information. They had no problem accessing the prime minister, but information in various areas was blocked to them and this hindered their work and led to compartmentalization and frustration. Haber and Sheves are seen as the guilty party.

The prime minister's bureau is having a hard time filling the vacated jobs. Interviewed by Qol Yisra'el, Sheves said that "many people would like to be cabinet secretaries and the prime minister's spokesman." He said he was talking about dozens of people, "all of them good," and noted that the prime minister would soon make up his mind. However, other bureau staffers would only say that the job of cabinet secretary became vacated on 1 April, that Rubinstein was asked to stay on until May, and that no replacement had been found to overlap with him.

Although the fact that the prime minister's media adviser would be quitting had been known for a few months, Ben-Ari left and his job has not yet been filled. One could say that the prime minister is the best government spokesman, and that he makes statements to the media quite often. However, the job of spokesman includes regular contacts with journalists, and while Israeli journalists can obtain information from other sources in the prime minister's bureau, foreign journalists have nobody to turn to.

People who know Sheves' working ability praise his performance and even his tendency to iron out differences and cut corners. "Sheves is a very good can-do man," said Justice Minister David Liba'i, the only minister who was prepared to speak for the record. "Myself, I have had very little contact with him, but his attitude has always been businesslike and matter-of-fact."

He is regarded as a sharp and intelligent man, but not as a methodic and theoretical thinker. People note his integrity and his disposition to speak up his mind anywhere, even to Rabin. According to various testimonies, Sheves does not recoil from confronting Rabin when this is necessary. A person who witnessed such a confrontation says that Sheves insisted on his position even when Rabin hollered at him. The same person added that Rabin hates obsequiousness and appreciates men who stand up for their views.

People say that with Sheves, a sensitive and direct man, you know exactly where you stand and note that he is a good friend. Other people, however, say that he can also be crass and rude.

King Husayn Holds Official Talks in Washington

Christopher Welcomes King

JN2006195494 Amman Jordan Television Network in English 1900 GMT 20 Jun 94

[Report by Murid Hammad in Washington; from the "News at Ten" program]

[Text] His Majesty the king began his official visit to Washington with a meeting with U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher.

Today's talks are expected to have covered the Middle East peace process, particularly the Jordanian-Israeli track, in addition to developments in the Middle East and bilateral ties.

[Begin recording] [Christopher] Good morning. I'm very honored today to welcome to the State Department King Husayn, who is an old friend in so many different ways. We're at an important moment, I think, in the history of the Middle East.

The recent bilateral discussions here between Israel and Jordan, with the participation of the United States, indicate that there is room for very real progress in the Middle East, and I've congratulated the king on that progress and urged that we would do everything we could to try to assist in that situation.

Jordan has stood for progress in the Middle East peace situation and their bilateral track, I think, is one on which there are great opportunities for the two countries to work together. So, as always, it's a great pleasure to welcome the king here. We have many items to discuss—their defense needs, the economic situation in Jordan, the path for democratization in Jordan. We have many items on which we have common interest, and, of course, many items on which we admire the king's leadership. So, Your Majesty, it's a great honor to have you here in the State Department.

[Husayn] Thank you very much indeed, Mr. Secretary. Thank you very very much indeed for your kind words of welcome, and I'm very pleased with the opportunity to meet with you today, sir, and hopefully in the next two days to meet with the President as well, and many of our friends here in Washington.

We are indeed optimistic as far as the future is concerned in our quest for a just, durable, comprehensive peace in the region. And we are very happy indeed that on the Jordanian-Israeli track we are about to begin to address the problems that were a part of the agenda worked out earlier on. And beginning with border demarcation, delineation, we hope this will take place on the ground there, and we appreciate certainly the role of our friends in supporting us and our efforts to arrive at this point. [end recording]

Today's talks were followed by a working lunch attended by the prime minister, the chief of the Royal Court, his majesty's political adviser, Prince Talal Bin-Muhammad, minister of state for prime ministry affairs, the minister of information, the minister of finance, and Jordan's ambassador in Washington.

On the U.S. side, it was attended by high-level delegation from the Departments of State and Defense, as well as President Clinton's national security adviser.

Sources from the Jordanian delegation told the News at Ten that today's meeting was fruitful and very successful.

Later tonight his majesty the king will meet U.S. Secretary of Commerce Ron Brown for talks that will center on trade relations between the two countries.

King on Israeli Track of Negotiations

JN2106074094 Amman JORDAN TIMES in English 21 Jun 94, p 1

[Excerpt] His Majesty King Husayn on Monday [20 June] held talks with U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher and said he was very pleased with the progress achieved in the Jordanian-Israeli tracks of negotiations and expressed hope that the other tracks in the Arab-Israeli peace process would also achieve similar progress.

The King, speaking at the State Department, also paid tribute to the U.S. efforts that went to advancing the negotiations.

"We are indeed optimistic as far as the future is concerned in our quest for a just, durable and comprehensive peace," the King told reporters. "We are very happy indeed that on the Jordanian-Israeli track we are about to begin to address the problems that were part of the agenda worked out earlier and beginning with border demarcation, delineation.

"We appreciate certainly the role of our friends in supporting us and our effort to arrive at this point."

The King was asked whether Jordan would sign a peace accord with Israel without waiting for Syria. The King replied, "We hope to see better support. But regarding us, we follow the Jordanian dimensions of the problems which we have started together from the same point... and as our brethren in Syria are negotiating, we are negotiating at the same time."

Asked if Jordan would sign a peae treaty with Israel if the Kingdom and the Jewish state could reach one before Syria and Lebanon did, the King said:

"It is a difficult question, and I would like to say that Jordan is practising its sovereignty and is dealing with its causes and the way to finding a solution to them. I hope that progress would take place on all other tracks to achieve comprehensive peace."

Asked whether he had recently met with Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhaq Rabin in London as suggested in some reports, the King said: "I do not confirm or deny such news."

At another point the King said, "I've never been afraid of daylight" and "the opportunity will come sometime soon for a meeting between Israeli and Jordanian officials." [passage omitted]

Christopher, King Hold News Conference

JN2106055194 Amman Jordan Television Network in Arabic 2000 GMT 20 Jun 94

[Report on news conference by King Husayn and U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher with unidentified correspondents; place and date not given—in English]

[Excerpts] His Majesty King Husayn has started an official visit to the United States. Observers and political analysts described the visit as extremely important and said it will be a new turning point in Jordanian-U.S. relations. His majesty the king began his visit by meeting with U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher, who received his majesty outside the State Department in Washington. The latest developments of the peace talks, particularly on the Jordanian-Israeli track and the recent Middle East developments, in addition to bilateral relations, are expected to be discussed. [passage omitted]

[Begin recording] [Correspondent] Your Highness: When will you finally meet Israeli leaders face to face in open broad daylight? When will you pray in Jerusalem? Do you accept the Israelis' position that Jerusalem is open religiously, but closed politically? I am [words indistinct]. Thank you.

[King Husayn] I've never been afraid of daylight, sir. In fact, I've always thrived living in daylight and I hope that the opportunity will come sometime soon for meetings at the highest possible levels between Jordanians and Israeli officials and I hope that the beginning that we will see in the very coming future will enable us to progress to the point where such a meeting will be held.

[Correspondent] What about peace in Syria? Nothing seems to be happening. The Syrians are saying they are waiting for answers from you and the Americans are still waiting for answers from the Syrians. What's going on? Is there any hope for real progress this summer?

[Christopher] Yes, I think there is hope for progress because the leaders of both countries seem to be very, very serious about negotiations and I'll expect that before the summer is out we will see some progress is made. There are very difficult questions on that track as there are on all the tracks, but when the leaders are seriously engaged, when they're wrestling with the hardest underlined problems, the threshold issues, I think it's natural that it would take some time and that's what we're experiencing at the present time. But I am not at all discouraged about the fact that we can make some progress, and I agree with the king that it's necessary to see this in a comprehensive sense and expect all the tracks to be moving forward, not perhaps exactly at the same pace, but nevertheless making comprehensive progress.

[Correspondent] You mentioned Jordan's role in the Middle East peace process and also in previous statements you described it as central. So, what do you mean by central and what is the United States willing to do to lift the physical and the mental siege that (?goes around us during) the past four years?

[Christopher] I think the best thing the United States can do is to play its role as one of the cosponsors of the peace process and to encourage the parties to make progress. There are still obviously the enemies of peace in the region. We see tragic episodes take place, but nevertheless, in an overall sense, I do see progress has been made and the role of the United States will be to facilitate the negotiations between the parties to try to serve the role that we have served from the very beginning. [end recording] [passage omitted]

Further on King's Meetings

JN2106064394 Amman Radio Jordan Network in Arabic 0400 GMT 21 Jun 94

[Report by 'Ali Hamati from Washington]

[Excerpts] His Majesty King Husayn has said Jordan's assumption of its basic and effective role in the peace process should be based on a strong Jordan and a solid economic base that gives all members of the one large Jordanian family an equal opportunity to lead a dignified, secure, and stable life. His majesty made these statements during his meeting with U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher at the U.S. State Department in Washington. His majesty stressed that Jordan adheres to a just, durable, and comprehensive peace in the region, indicating that progress on the Jordanian track should be an incentive for progress on the other tracks.

For his part, Warren Christopher showed a clear understanding of the Jordanian role in the peace process and of the social and economic difficulties caused by this role. He said Washington will extend all possible assistance, whose details, he said, will be discussed by the joint Jordanian-U.S. committee, which will hold its first meeting at the State Department on Wednesday [22 June].

His majesty and Secretary Christopher then held an expanded session of talks, interrupted by a working luncheon. [passage omitted]

Later, his majesty the king received U.S. Secretary of Commerce Ronald Brown at his place of residence in Washington . Bilateral trade relations were discussed during the meeting.

His Majesty King Husayn had earlier expressed optimism about progress in the Middle East peace process.

Speaking to reporters at the State Department, he hoped the Jordanian-Israeli talks under U.S. sponsorship will lead to the demarcation of borders in the near future. Asked when his majesty will meet with Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhaq Rabin, his majesty said he has never been afraid of working in daylight. He hoped the opportunity will come soon for a meeting between Jordanian and Israeli officials at the highest level. He also hoped that the near future will witness further progress in the peace process. [passage omitted]

His majesty the king will hold a news conference later today to brief local and world press correspondents on the latest developments of the peace process and other important issues.

In another development, the Jordanian and U.S. experts held a meeting at the Jordanian delegation's place of residence in Washington at dawn today, Amman time. During this preliminary meeting, bilateral relations and the burdens of the peace process on Jordan were discussed. The Jordanian side explained these burdens.

Party Congress Ends; New Supreme Command Elected

JN1406103194 Amman AL-RA'Y in Arabic 14 Jun 94 p 6

[Text] Taysir al-Himsi, secretary of the Supreme Command of the Jordanian Arab Socialist Ba'th Party, yesterday held a press conference at his party's headquarters to announce the resolutions of the party's second congress, which was held recently, and the outcome of the elections to the party's leadership.

Al-Himsi stressed that the congress discussed a number of important issues on the local, Arab, and international levels and determined its view over these issues in accordance with the party's pan-Arab principles and firm position on the central causes of the Arab nation. The party, he said, emphasized the need for pan-Arab solutions to any regional issue since solutions to any regional political or economic issues will be incomplete if not discussed and addressed within the framework of the comprehensive Arab solution.

Al-Himsi said the congress urged all Arab and world organizations and parliaments to act to lift the unjust blockade imposed on Iraq and stop the bloodshed in fraternal Yemen on the basis of preserving its unity and fighting any secessionist trend regardless of any motives and reasons.

He added that the congress also reviewed the settlement plans proposed to liquidate the Palestine question, including the Gaza-Jericho First plan, the Majdal Shams First plan, and the Jordanian-Israeli agenda. The congress reaffirmed the party's rejection of the capitulationist trend represented in the Madrid and Oslo process and underlined the Ba'th Party's position, which states that the Palestine question is the Arabs' central cause and no one has the right to a unilateral decision over it.

The congress further noted that the proposed liquidationist plans target the Arab identity and serve as an instrument for the attainment of the Zionist dreams.

He said the congress also stressed the importance of activating and entrenching the democracy process in Jordan as an irrevocable alternative and the need to allow all political forums—including parties, organizations, and professional associations—the opportunity to participate in the decisionmaking in order to activate and entrench popular participation. The congress also stressed the need to provide opportunities for others to express their opinion in order to strengthen the concept of pluralism and freedom. This, the congress says, requires the provision of further freedoms for the party newspapers since they represent the views of the opposition political forces whose presence provides a safety valve in any multi-party democratic march.

At the conclusion of his press conference, al-Himsi declared the names of the members of the party's supreme command who were elected by the congress, These are: Taysir al-Himsi, Adam al-'Abdallat, Ahmad al-Mitliq, Jamal al-Rahaminah, 'Abd-al-Majid al-Qarari'ah, Sulayman Abu-'Adilah, 'Ayid 'Amayirah, Ahmad Irshayd, Akram al- Himsi, Muhammad al-Dakhlallah, and Akram al-Nimri. Three reserve members were also elected. These are: Samu'il Fakhuri, Khalid al-'Arif, and Faruq al-Za'n.

IAF Deputies Condemn Agreements With Israel

JN2006081094 Damascus Syrian Arab Republic Radio Network in Arabic 2015 GMT 19 Jun 94

[Text] Amman—The deputies of the Jordanian Islamic Action Front [IAF] today denounced the Jordanian-Israeli agreements signed recently, considering them a clear recognition of the Zionist entity and its usurpation of security, stability, and waters in the region.

In a statement in Amman today, the deputies said: We think that these agreements represent a Jordanian retreat from the constant principles reiterated repeatedly by the officials, mainly, rejecting unilateral peace, adhering to the Islamic and Arab character of Jerusalem, and the right of the refugees to return to their usurped country.

The Jordanian IAF deputies stressed their condemnation and rejection of this approach that is being pursued by the Jordanian government, contrary to the attitudes of the Jordanian people who reject all these concessions, noting that the opinion of the Jordanian people and their representatives was not sought on these negotiations that target their land, destiny, and future.

Also, the Jordanian Arab Constitutional Front Party has asserted that Syria represents the strong spirit of the Arabs in the face of the enemies of the Arab nation and their supporters.

In a statement today, the party said: At a time when we were expecting to consolidate and expand cooperation

and coordination between Jordan and fraternal Syria to overcome this serious, decisive stage of the peace talks, the new Jordanian position to resume the Jordanian-Israeli negotiations in Washington came as a destructive turning point for the Arab position in its stronger Damascus-Amman-Beirut front.

The statement went on: Our Jordanian people were surprised by this serious turning point which was peddled by diverting the attention of the people by what preceded the recent cabinet reshuffle and the statements about more coordination and cohesion between Syria and Jordan. The Jordanian officials themselves said that coordination enhances the Arab negotiating position to a level that can force the occupiers to submit to the resolutions of international legitimacy by withdrawing from all the occupied Arab territories.

The statement added that the new position of the Jordanian government, whose head had led the negotiations before he assumed the premiership, constitutes an imminent danger to Jordan and the Palestinian cause and is an offense to the requirements of coordination and cooperation between the Arab brothers in Syria and Lebanon.

It added that all that Syria is facing is on account of its adherence to Arab rights, embodied in the constant principles of the nation, noting that Syria is standing like a solid wall in the face of all international pressures and Arab deviations.

The statement concluded: The new policy of the Jordanian government will lead us to an inevitable national disaster. Jordan—land and people—does not stand to gain from turning its back on its brothers. Its interest lies in harmonizing its steps and policies with the steps of its Arab brothers.

Tujan Faysal, member of the Jordanian House of Representatives, said the Jordanian government has shown reservations over the question of comprehensive coordination among Jordan, Syria, and Lebanon.

In an interview with the Lebanese newspaper AL-HAYAH, the Jordanian deputy added: I am against this position. I believe that if I am looking for solutions to the economic problems, then I should coordinate my cooperation with any Arab party so that we can achieve what is better and more useful for both of us.

Answering another question, Deputy Tujan Faysal said the opposition deputies at the Jordanian parliament have felt that the Jordanian government opposes Syrian proposals because it thinks these proposals aim at something wider than what we want.

Mrs. Tujan asked: Is this reasonable and logical? How can it be in our interest to coordinate with Israel and the PLO leadership and ignore coordination with the Arabs, such as Syria and Lebanon?

Answering another question, Mrs. Tujan said: The popular forces that stood with Iraq during the Gulf war today want to coordinate with Syria. This stems from our feeling that we are facing a common enemy and that Syria still refuses to make concessions to this enemy. So is it in our interest to leave Syria and adopt a unilateral stance in the face of this enemy?

She added: If we cite the pretext that we are doing this because we are a small, weak nation and our economy is suffering from difficulties, then we can reply to this by saying that it is in our interest to cooperate and coordinate more closely with Syria, since it is a big country that has a strong economy. This will be more secure for us than dealing with Israel, which only thinks about how to swallow us and devour our rights after dealing with us individually.

She added: The Jordanian people demand coordination with Syria while the government insists on heading west toward Israel. It was no coincidence that the Jordanian information minister's statements about the details of the agreement with Israel came in the wake of increasing promises that the people will see economic boom and prosperity.

Israel Launches Air Raids Against Hizballah

NC2006174794 Beirut Radio Lebanon in Arabic 1530 GMT 20 Jun 94

[Text] Israeli military aircraft launched two air raids on Hizballah positions in western al-Biqa' and in the south today, but there were no casualties. In the meantime, the resistance launched an attack in retaliation. Agent Lahd militia [South Lebanese Army] admitted that three Israeli soldiers were killed in a resistance attack on an Israeli patrol shortly after the Israeli air raid. Sources said that the other Israeli soldiers in the patrol were critically wounded and an Israeli personnel carrier was destroyed in the attack near al-Shaqif castle. Our correspondent in the south 'Ali Dawud reports:

[Begin Dawud recording] Israeli artillery bombarded several villages in the al-Nabatiyah and Iqlim al-Tuffah areas today, injuring two people in Kafr Tibnit, damaging several homes, and burning crops. The resistance retaliated by attacking Israeli and agent positions in al-Burj, 'Ali al-Tahir, al-Shaqif castle, and the al-Khardali bridge road.

The Israeli aircraft launched an air raid on Jabal al-Rafi' area in Iqlim al-Tuffah at 1455 today, firing two air-to-surface missiles. In the meantime, Israeli aircraft flew over al-Nabatiyah and Iqlim al-Tuffah. According to eyewitnesses, the Israeli military aircraft raided the al-Qatranah area, but the Islamic Resistance sources affirmed that the raid targeted its positions in al-Luwayzah hills.

At 1530, the Israeli forces expanded the scope of their aggression, and Israeli artillery in al-Zaffatah bombarded the Iqlim al-Tuffah hills and heights, focusing on Mlita, al-Luwayzah, and Jabal Safi. The sporadic bombardment continued for one hour. At 1545, the Israeli barrage reached the villages of Kafr Tibnit, Yuhmur, Arnun, Zawtar al-Gharbiyah, Zawtar al-Sharqiyah, the outskirts of al-Nabatiyah al-Fawqa, Shukin, and Mayfadun. The bombardment was accompanied by bursts of heavy machine-gun fire to these areas. The shelling of Kafr Tibnit injured Khadijah Bushr, 66, who was taken to the hospital where she succumbed to her wounds. Qasim Siblin was injured in his foot and was taken to the government hospital in al-Nabatiyah. The bombardment of Kafr Tibnit by incendiary shells set fire to the crops, particularly the cornfields. The shelling of Kafr Tibnit and the Arnun-Yuhmur highway continued at 1700. The Lebanese civil defense teams rushed to fight the fires in Kafr Tibnit but were met with difficulties because of the sniper fire on the area. The civil defense sources said that they sent several fire-fighting vehicles to extinguish the fires that had spread to crops. They managed to put out a fire in Kafr Tibnit but failed to put out a fire near the Arnun road and al-Shaqif castle. These sources said that Lebanese army units assisted the civil defense teams and other volunteers in the area to extinguish the fires.

Tension prevails in the villages in the al-Nabatiyah area adjacent to the contacts lines with the occupied border strip. Meanwhile Israeli helicopters flew over the area from al-Shaqif castle up the al-Burj and 'Ali al-Tahir at 1745 today and raked the al-Khardali bridge area.

The Islamic Boy Scouts room of operation took part in fighting the fires and they sent ambulances to take the wounded to the hospitals. They also secured vehicles to move families from the eastern part of Kafr Tibnit to al-Nabatiyah and other safe areas.

The Islamic Resistance issued initial information on several operations they launched this afternoon against Israeli and agent patrols inside the occupied strip. It said that its groups attacked an enemy convoy composed of 30 soldiers on the al-Khardali road this afternoon, completely destroying a Reo vehicle, a jeep, a personnel carrier, and damaging other vehicles. It said that all members of the patrol were killed or injured. [end recording]

Israeli Soldier Killed, 3 Injured in South

TA2006195594 Tel Aviv IDF Radio in Hebrew 1930 GMT 20 Jun 94

[Text] An IDF [Israel Defense Forces] soldier was killed, a second soldier sustained moderate wounds, and two others were lightly injured this afternoon by terrorist fire directed at an IDF unit in south Lebanon. Our Army affairs correspondent Yariv Ben-Yehuda reports:

[Begin recording] [Ben-Yahuda] Sergeant No'am Simha, 21, from Kibbutz Rosh Haniqra was killed this afternoon in south Lebanon. Three other soldiers were wounded, one moderately and two lightly. The casualties were soldiers in the Nahal Brigade who were part of a convoy that was making its way to the outpost at Beaufort Castle. The supply convoy consisted of a water tanker, several trucks, and armored personnel carriers.

The road leading to the outpost is very steep, rising 700 meters above sea level. Before they reached the outpost, when most of the unit was making its way on foot, the terrorists fired antitank Sagger missiles and mortar bombs at the convoy and the outpost. One of the soldiers was killed by a missile and three others were wounded, one moderately and two lightly.

Prime Minister Yitzhaq Rabin reacted to the incident, saying it was a painful incident but did not mean an exacerbation of the tension on the northern border.

[Rabin] Unfortunately there was an incident, but this is not an exacerbation of the situation. I cannot say that it deviates from other incidents to date, only that the outcome is more painful. [end recording]

SLA Positions Shelled; No Casualties Reported

NC2106101694 Kafr Killa Voice of the South in Arabic 0930 GMT 21 Jun 94

[Text] The South Lebanese Army [SLA] positions in al-Nabi Tahir and Kafr Tibnit came under artillery fire

from the terrorists' positions in the vicinity of the Kafr Tibnit township around 1100 today. The shelling did not cause any casualties.

The Israeli and the SLA artillery retaliated and silenced the fire.

IDF Artillery Hits 'Security Zone'

TA2106110194 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 1000 GMT 21 Jun 94

[Text] This afternoon, the IDF [Israel Defense Forces] directed artillery fire at targets in the northern part of the security zone's central sector. This morning, targets between al-Nabatiyah and Jazzin were shelled.

Beirut Radio reported that Israeli planes flew over al-Nabatiyah and Iqlim al-Tuffah.

Our correspondent was told that several katyusha rockets and mortar shells landed near al-Mansuriyah in the eastern sector.

AL-'AHD on Reaction to Israel's 2 Jun Raid

NC1706121394

[Editorial report] Beirut AL-'AHD in Arabic devotes its entire 3 June 15-page issue to the Israeli air raids against a Hizballah training camp in Ba'labakk on 2 June.

On page 2, the paper publishes the names of 26 people killed and 40 wounded in the raids.

On page 3, AL-'AHD publishes an approximately 1,000-word statement issued by Hizballah in the wake of the Israeli raids. The statement says that "the Zionist enemy, backed militarily, politically, and morally by global arrogance, is waging a vicious war against our homeland, people, livelihood, and waters." The statement adds that "the enemy has been using the so-called peace negotiations as a way to undermine our society and nation. While America, the archsatan and the Zionists' principal ally, is demanding that in the name of negotiations and peace the Arabs and Muslims give up their mainstays of power and lay down their arms in return for eliminating the sources of tension—as Washington puts it—America at the same time declares its commitment to maintain the Zionist enemy's superiority and defend its security. Washington's objective is to destroy our nation and the Resistance and plunder our resources."

On the same page, the paper publishes an approximately 400-word statement by head of the Hizballah Political Bureau al-Hajj Husayn Khalil commenting on the Israeli raids. Khalil says "the continuing Zionist attacks on our land, people, plantations, and waters—attacks culminating in the treacherous aggression against Ba'labakk early today—are equivocal evidence that the decision to participate in the peace negotiations was wrong. Everyone realizes that Lebanon's participation in the negotiations continues to give Israel pretexts and excuses to pursue its policy of terrorism. Khalil goes on to say that "all officials, regardless of their positions, are called upon to take a responsible, firm stand toward the deep wound inflicted by the Zionist aggression and to withdraw from the negotiations indefintely."

On the same page, AL-'AHD publishes an approximately 450-word eulogy delivered by Hizballah Secretary General Nasrallah. After exalting the martyrs, Nasrallah says that "the bestial Zionist aggression today will only increase our reliance on Almighty God and will make us more determined to forge ahead along the road of jihad regardless of sacrifices."

On page 4, AL-'AHD publishes the approximately 1,300-word eulogy delivered by Ayatollah Muhammad Husayn Fadlallah in honor of the souls of those who fell as a result of the Israeli raids on Ba'labakk. Fadlallah says: "As Muslims, mujahidin, and oppressed people, we decided there is no place for Israel among us, and that global arrogance will no longer have influence on our positions. Israel might win several rounds, and global arrogance might win several positions, but it is justice that will win in the end." Fadlallah continues that "the United States is a wolf that devours man, peace, and life. We know that every Israeli bullet is in fact an American bullet directed at the chests of the oppressed and the entire people." He adds: "We cannot accept the United States as a friend, no matter how events might develop. The United States will never be a friend of the Arabs and Muslims nor a friend of the oppressed."

On page 5, AL-'AHD publishes an approximately 1,500-word analysis by Ja'far Fadlallah on the Israeli aggression and the options to confront it. The writer says that the Israeli enemy "is pursuing a scorched earth policy to force the people to emigrate after losing the sources of their livelihoods and to spread an atmosphere of instability and tension that will create a vacuum." The writer adds that the Israeli enemy "aims to put the blame on the resistance and to instigate divisions and make the people abandon the resistance. This is an old strategy that the Zionist entity has been trying to implement by all means." Fadlallah continues that "the Zionist escalation is aimed at the Lebanese authorities, who would have quickly responded to the contents and conditions of the Zionist message if it had freedom of action. The substance of the message is that reliance on Syrian support will not guarantee protection and internal stability. This is obvious from the fact that the long Zionist arm can penetrate any area in Lebanon."

On pages 10 to 13, the paper publishes an approximately 5,500-word selection of reactions by various organizations, officials, and deputies to the Israeli raids on Ba'labakk. The Islamic Revolutionary Army Organization for the Liberation of Palestine [Munazzamat al-jaysh al-thawri al-islami li tahrir Filastin] denounces the aggression and says that "it is confirmation of the Zionist capitulationist negotiations with traitors like 'Arafat and those panting for an illusionary peace with the Zionist entity." The Popular Front for the Liberation

of Palestine-General Command says that "the new Zionist aggression is a manifestation of the provisions of the Oslo-Cairo Agreement and is aimed at the forces rejecting the U.S.-Zionist designs of hegemony." The General Secretariat of the Union Party "calls on the Lebanese Government to stop negotiations in view of this continuous aggression."

On page 14, AL-'AHD publishes an approximately 400-word report on an interview given by Hizballah Deputy Secretary General Shaykh Na'im Qasim to the BBC's "Other Opinions" program. While denying that Hizballah is holding Israeli pilot Ron Arad, Qasim says: "We have two Israeli soldiers; we do not deny this. They were captured during an Israeli commando operation in the south in 1986, and their names are known."

Shiite Opposes Creation of Islamic Republic

NC1706100994 Kafr Killa Voice of the South in Arabic 0930 GMT 17 Jun 94

[Text] His Eminence Shaykh Muhammad Mahdi Sham-al-Din, chairman of the Higher Islamic Shiite Council, has stated that the continued occupation of south Lebanon is like having the capital itself occupied, in addition to the Presidential Palace, the Prime Minister's Office, the Chamber of Deputies, and all Christian patriarchial seats in the country.

His eminence remarked that he opposes the establishment of an Islamic republic in Lebanon because the country is comprised of Muslims and Christians. He said an Islamic republic would not be conducive to the security of either the Muslim or Christian communities in Lebanon.

Yemeni Parliamentary Delegation Pays Visit

Parliament Speaker Meets Delegates

JN1806175494 Damascus Syrian Arab Television Network in Arabic 1730 GMT 18 Jun 94

[Text] 'Abd-al-Qadir Qaddurah, the chairman of the Executive Committee of the Syrian Arab Parliamentary Branch, this afternoon received a Yemeni parliamentary delegation, led by 'Abbas al-Mu'ayyad, member of the House of Representatives. Shakir Is'ayyid, the vice chairman of the Executive Committee, attended.

Discussions dealt with the latest developments in fraternal Yemen and the need to stop the fighting, dialogue, and maintaining Yemeni unity.

Al-Shar' Receives Group

JN1906131494 Damascus Syrian Arab Republic Radio Network in Arabic 1115 GMT 19 Jun 94

[Text] Foreign Minister Faruq al-Shar' this morning received the Yemeni parliamentary delegation, headed by Sultan Sa'id al-Burkani.

Discussions dealt with latest developments in the Yemeni arena.

Al-Ahmar Meets With Delegation

JN2006125094 Damascus Syrian Arab Republic Radio Network in Arabic 1115 GMT 20 Jun 94

[Text] Comrade 'Abdallah al-Ahmar, assistant secretary general of the Arab Socialist Ba'th Party, received this morning the visiting Yemeni parliamentary delegation, headed by Sultan Sa'id al-Burkani. The meeting was attended by Shakir Is'ayyid, vice chairman of the Executive Committee of the Syrian Arab Parliamentary Branch.

Talks centered on latest developments in the Yemeni arena. They also stressed the need to halt fighting among the Yemeni brothers and to return to dialogue in order to save Yemen from destruction and fragmentation and to preserve the Yemeni people's unity.

Khaddam Reportedly Meets With Hamas Delegation

JN2006095594 Amman AL-MAJD in Arabic 20 Jun 94 p 1

[Text] AL-MAJD has learned that a two-hour meeting was held yesterday, Sunday, between Syrian Vice President 'Abd-al-Halim Khaddam and a delegation from Hamas [Islamic Resistance Movement]. The Hamas delegation was led by Dr. Musa Abu-Marzuq and included Engineer Ibrahim Ghawshah and Muhammad Nazzal, whose passports were recently released, and Abu-Muhammad Mustafa, the Hamas representative in Damascus.

There were no details of what took place during the meeting. The Syrian-Hamas meeting comes before an expanded meeting of the alliance of the 10 Palestinian factions that oppose the settlement, which will be held today, Monday, in the evening. The meeting will address several issues, the most important of which are the settlement process and the situation of Palestinian refugees in Lebanon.

Commentary: U.S. Could Implement UN Resolutions

JN1806143794 Damascus Syrian Arab Republic Radio Network in Arabic 1130 GMT 18 Jun 94

[Station commentary]

[Text] Gentlemen: Informed U.S. circles have cast doubt on the possibility of U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher making a new visit to the Middle East this week, attributing this to insufficient signs of progress in the regional peace process.

It is known that such signs should be shown by Israel. Syria has frequently proven its real desire to achieve peace. It has constantly worked for the success of the U.S. and the international efforts, as part of the Madrid conference and according to its established bases.

What has happened so far, however, conflicts with these bases. The just and comprehensive peace to which the U.S. administration committed itself has become separate partial deals. The Washington talks were stymied in favor of secret talks here and there. In addition, the Security Council resolutions, which are supposed to organize the peace process, were deliberately ignored. Israel continued to intensify the situation in southern Lebanese areas. It did not hide the fact that its escalating attacks are intended to terrorize Lebanon and pressure Syria.

Under these circumstances, observers naturally wonder about the promised U.S. role. Washington is supposed to be the first to defend its initiative and adhere to its commitments, and, consequently, halt the continued Israeli sabotage of the peace process, in accordance with the agreed bases.

Politicians and observers know it is impossible to achieve peace in the Middle East without Syria, and that the attempts to circumvent Syria and ignore its basic role in the region will lead the peace process to a real impasse. While it is in the interest of the Middle East to achieve a state of peace that gives it an opportunity to dedicate its resources to development, it is definitely in the interest of the United States that the aspired peace is firm and well-established, rather than a mere truce that cannot withstand events and developments.

A firm and well-established peace requires a minimum level of justice, fairness, and honesty. Syria has always made it clear that Israel's full withdrawal from the

Golan, southern Lebanon, and the other occupied territories is an inevitable prelude to the establishment of peace. The Security Council resolutions actually stipulate that Israel should withdraw and that the Israeli measures of annexation, Judaization, and settlements are null and void.

The U.S. initiative itself provides for exchanging land for peace. Israel, however, has thus far refused to commit itself to full withdrawal from the occupied territories. It has only hinted at the possibility of a partial withdrawal from the Golan. It also announces daily that it has annexed Jerusalem once and for all, in addition to important parts of the West Bank, under the guise of a greater Jerusalem. To prove its rejection of the substance of the peace process, namely, returning the occupied territories, Israel shells southern Lebanon every day and threatens to escalate its acts of aggression.

Saving the peace process from deliberate Israeli sabotage is a U.S. and international responsibility. The United States has the clout it will take to implement the Security Council resolutions. Without doing so, peace in the Middle East will remain a deferred project. The only way to achieve peace is a daring and decisive international position that removes Israeli belligerence from the region's atmosphere.

Press: Peace Needs 'Effective' U.S. Intervention

JN1906102894 Damascus Syrian Arab Republic Radio Network in Arabic 0445 GMT 19 Jun 94

[Press review]

[Text] Today's press commentaries address the clear and unambiguous Syrian position on the peace process, as well as U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher's tour of the region.

In its commentary today, the newspaper AL-BA'TH asserts that Syria's clear and unambiguous position on the peace process can no longer be questioned. This is because it is a position that is committed to international legitimacy, as well as the peace initiative that aims to achieve just and comprehensive peace in the most dangerous hotbed of tension in the world.

AL-BA'TH adds: As for Israel, regardless of its wordplay and deception, it cannot cover up for its obstruction of peace efforts. Nor can it, for that matter, cover up for its continuous crimes in the occupied Arab territories and the defenseless Lebanese towns.

The paper goes on to say: The recent Israeli escalation, which has taken place on the eve of the date set for Christopher's new tour of the region, has demonstrated that Israel is persisting with its policy of seeking to conclude unilateral and separate deals with the Arab sides. This escalation is also part of efforts to bring pressure to bear on Syria to make it change its firm and principled position on the peace process.

But, it remains to be said, AL-BA'TH says, that the language of threats and pressures will not undermine the Syrian position.

The paper concludes by saying: If the U.S. secretary of state were to suddenly decide on a quick return to the region, he must use various cards that could help him make progress. This is necessary if his country is to play the role of a full partner and an honest broker, as his administration has repeatedly said it would. The party that is obstructing the peace process; namely, Israel, must be the target of this role.

In the "With the Events" column, AL-BA'TH comments on the dangers posed by the Zionist onslaught against Arab Jerusalem.

Under the headline "There Can Be No Peace Without Syria," the newspaper TISHRIN notes that U.S. officials have ruled out a possible tour of the Middle East by U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher at present. The paper also notes Israel's efforts to deceive the world public and conceal its constant attempts to scuttle the peace process by thwarting the efforts under way to advance the peace talks.

TISHRIN adds: As is well known to everybody, Syria has declared its clear commitment to implementing the relevant UN Security Council resolutions and meeting all the requirements of just and comprehensive peace in the Middle East. It has matched words with deeds, and repeatedly helped save the peace process from Israeli conspiracies in order to render the U.S. efforts a success. Israel alone has deliberately tried to obstruct the peace process. It has publicly called for replacing the Washington talks, which are based on the Madrid formula, with separate negotiations.

TISHRIN goes on to say: The new Israeli escalation in southern Lebanon confirms anew the Tel Aviv government's rejection of just and comprehensive peace, the relevant UN Security Council resolutions, and the land-for-peace formula.

Concluding its commentary, TISHRIN argues that it is impossible to achieve peace in the region without an effective U.S. intervention, and unless the U.S. commitments and pledges are translated into acts and realities on the ground through pressures on Israel to make it abandon its obstructionist approach and succumb to international legitimacy.

The paper adds: Syria is eager to achieve peace. Its efforts to achieve it are unmistakable. Nonetheless, Syria seeks to restore all its territories. For Syria cannot abandon its territories, nor can it bargain over these territories. And without Syria, there can be no peace in the Middle East.

In the "Opinion" column, the newspaper TISHRIN comments on the dangers posed by the Israeli Judaization and settlement plan in the occupied territories. It also views neofascism in Italy under the "Viewpoint" column.

Under the headline "Between Two Stands," the newspaper AL-THAWRAH says: The entire world community, and the U.S. Administration in particular, has seen Syria's eagerness to achieve just and comprehensive peace on the basis of the principles on which the Madrid conference convened—the principles pertaining to the implementation of the relevant resolutions, particularly the principle of trading land for peace.

AL-THAWRAH adds: The fact that is widely known to the entire world community is that Syria's serious approach toward the issue of achieving just and comprehensive peace is not a transient development. Syria has always championed the cause of peace, and favorably responded to all the efforts and initiatives grounded in international legitimacy and the restoration of territories and rights.

The U.S. administration, through President Clinton, has repeatedly expressed its convictions regarding Syria's truthful peace intentions, noting that Syria has responded to all peace efforts to render the peace process a success.

AL-THAWRAH goes on to say: Israel has demonstrated that it is opposed to just, comprehensive, and viable peace. This is because it is adhering to the strategy of expansion and holding on to the occupied Arab territories. It is not contributing to the success of the peace process. As a matter of fact, it is doing all it can to scuttle the peace process to cause it to collapse and render it void of any meaningful content. Syria has declared its willingness to meet the demands of the international community with regard to the implementation of international legitimacy resolutions, because it believes that the terms of reference of the peace process upheld by the cosponsors of this process are in line with its pro-peace approach, which is tantamount to a full-blown strategy, particularly since the issue at stake is the restoration of all rights, and all occupied territories.

AL-THAWRAH concludes by saying: Syria has demonstrated a credible peace stance. In the same vein, it has addressed a letter to the entire world community, saying that it cannot abandon a single iota of its national soil, and that the Israeli version of peace is unviable, because Israel wants to achieve peace and maintain the occupation of Arab territories.

In another commentary, AL-THAWRAH says: Undoubtedly, Israel will be mistaken if it believes that it can promote its erroneous concepts and ideas regarding the achievement of peace in the region. It must realize quite well that Syria, without which there can be no peace, will accept nothing short of a just and comprehensive peace that would ensure the restoration of all occupied Arab territories to their rightful owners. If Israel is truly seeking peace, it must realize that peace is achievable only when the last Israeli soldier is evicted from the last inch of the occupied Golan territory, and other occupied territories.

Afghanistan

Peace Talks Stalled Over Dostam's Participation

BK2106105794 Hong Kong AFP in English 1044 GMT 21 Jun 94

[Report by Terence White]

[Text] Kabul, June 21 (AFP)—Kabul peace talks between rival faction leaders President Borhanoddin Rabbani and Prime Minister Golboddin Hekmatyar have stalled for the second successive day over the issue of ex-communists, official sources said Tuesday [21 June].

Delegations from the two sides were supposed to meet early Tuesday at the west Kabul headquarters of the Shiite Hezb-e Wahdat faction, but a spokesman there told AFP Hekmatyar had insisted on the attendance of representatives of his ex-communist ally, Uzbek General 'Abdol Rashid Dostam.

"Rabbani's people refuse to sit down with any one from Dostam," said the Wahdat official. Dostam was allied to Rabbani until January this year, when he launched a failed coup attempt against the president, supported by Hekmatyar's Hezb-e Eslami faction. Inconclusive fighting has raged in Kabul for nearly six months since.

Jalil Shams, the deputy foreign minister and special peace mediator, went Tuesday to Hekmatyars's Chahar Asiab headquarters outside Kabul to try and persuade the prime minister to change his stance over Dostam, the Wahdat official said. But, the Wahdat official said that to ignore the Junbish party of Dostam was "to kill any chance for a successful solution" to the problems in Afghanistan. "Junbish is a real power in Afghanistan and must be included in peace talks," he said.

The hoped-for Kabul talks between Rabbani and Hekmatyar are described as a "preliminary" session to a larger conference proposed by Sham's peace mission in the western provincial capital Herat, to which all faction leaders—except Dostam—have been invited. The idea of the Herat conference is to set up an interim government to run the country after the end of June, when Hekmatyar and others expect Rabbani's presidency to end. But Rabbani's followers steadfastly refuse to admit that the president must resign at the end of June.

At the Intercontinental Hotel Tuesday Rabbani attended a special conference of supporters who insisted the president only hand over power to a national assembly or Loya Jirga.

"We demand the president remain in power until the convening of a grand national assembly," declared Ahmad Hashmi, chief of the Islamic Brotherhood and Reconciliation Front. "Only by this way can we avoid a power vacuum," Hashmi said.

"Leaving the country without a president, even for one day, is total madness," said another speaker.

Rabbani himself, in a half-hour speech, ignored the subject of his resignation but declared his support for the Herat talks on the condition that all factions were represented.

However, the president stressed that the faction leaders should not monopolise power but allow the Afghan people to decide their future—presumably a call for an immediate national assembly without a preliminary interim government as proposed by the Herat peace commission.

India

Kashmiris Protest Killing of Religious Leader

BK2006161694 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 1530 GMT 20 Jun 94

[Text] In the Kashmir Valley, a well-known scholar and mirwaiz [religious leader] of south Kashmir, Qazi Nissar Ahmad, has been shot dead by militants. His body was found at Dayalgam in Anantnag District this morning. Qazi Nissar Ahmad was kidnapped from his residence last evening. One of the killers has been identified as Fayaz Ahmad Mir, alias Abu Bakr, who according to official sources belongs to the militant outfit Hizbul Mojahedin.

Over 50,000 people took out a procession in Anantnag town in protest against the killing and demanded immediate arrest of the killers. The funeral procession raised anti-Hizbul Mojahedin and anti-Pakistan slogans.

The prime minister has expressed shock and grief at the tragic death of Qazi Nissar. Condemning the killing, the state governor, General K.V. Krishna Rao, said it clearly indicates that the militants have no respect for religion or human rights. The BJP [Bharatiya Janata Party] and the CPI-M [Communist Party of India-Marxist] have also condemned the killing. The BJP general secretary, Mr. K.L. Sharma, asked the government to take firm measures against the militants, while the CPI-M said it showed that the struggle in the Kashmir valley is not on communal lines, but between the patriotic and antinational forces.

Four left parties and the Janata Dal have called for revival of the political process in Jammu and Kashmir. In a joint statement in New Delhi, the CPI-M, CPI [Communist Party of India], Forward Bloc, RSP [Revolutionary Socialist Party], and the Janata Dal urged the center to deal firmly with militancy in the valley and districts like Doda. They alleged that the BJP has chosen to utilize the current events in the state to deepen the communal polarization. The union civil aviation minister, Mr. Ghulam Nabi Azad, has said the migrants in the Doda District in Jammu and Kashmir are likely to return home very soon. He was speaking to newsmen after a two-day tour of the bordering villages in Himachal Pradesh.

Further on Demonstrations

BK2106095894 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 0830 GMT 21 Jun 94

[Text] In the Kashmir Valley, a near total bundh [strike] is being observed today as a mark of protest against the killing by militants of the religious scholar and mirwaiz [religious leader] of South Kashmir, Dr. Qazi Nissar Ahmad. Shops and business establishments are closed and traffic is off the roads. In Anantnag, thousands of people are visiting the idgah [place of worship] to pay their last homage to Dr. Qazi Nissar Ahmad. Dr. Ahmad's body was brought there this morning for burial in the afternoon. Spontaneous protest demonstrations by people against militants of the Hizbul Mojahedin and their mentors in Pakistan have been held at several places in the Kashmir valley since yesterday. About one lakh persons participated in Qazi Nissar's funeral procession from Dayalgam to Anantnag yesterday.

In Srinagar, a building of school run by the Jamaat-i-Islami was burnt down by an irate mob yesterday. Reports say the militants of the Hizbul Mojahedin and workers of Jamaat-i-Islami have fled from their homes in several areas fearing the people's wrath. The police have identified one of the killers of Dr. Qazi Nissar Ahmad as a self-styled platoon commander of the militant outfit.

The Indian Union Muslim League [IUML] has asked the union government to take urgent steps to apprehend the culprits behind Dr. Nissar Ahmad's killing. In a statement in Trivandrum, the IUML secretary, Mr. E. Ahmad, MP, deplored the killing.

Paper Sees No Evidence of Nuclear Arsenal

BK2106073094 Delhi THE ECONOMIC TIMES in English 14 Jun 94 pp 1, 4

[Text] Indirect evidence now available seems to suggest that India has 'zero bombs in the basement'.

This runs counter to inferences of nuclear experts of the West, who have claimed that India may have anything from 6 to 20 weapons. In fact, the general belief that India is only "days or weeks away from fabricating a nuclear weapon" also appears to be false.

While it is likely that India does have a stockpile of weapons material in the form of plutonium (Pu-239)—western analysts give a figure of about 200-300 kg—India is far away from being able to put together an efficient and deliverable weapon at short notice. If this is indeed true, the likelihood of which is high, the bubble of India's nuclear ambiguity stands completely blown. In short, India is 'nuclear naked'.

In this context, the Prime Minister, Mr P V Narasimha Rao's statement in his concluding address at the Delhi session of the All India Congress Committee (AICC) on Saturday, that India will keep its nuclear option open as long as there is universal nuclear disarmament, begs the following question.

Can India exercise the nuclear option if it wants to at a short notice? The nuclear test by China on Friday is only likely to heighten the demands of the likes of the BJP [Bharatiya Janata Party] that India should go nuclear forthwith. Mr L K Advani has reiterated his call at the Baroda session of the BJP's national council meeting.

The bare critical mass required to sustain an explosive chain reaction in a bomb configuration, a sphere of weapons grade plutonium (which has about 6 per cent Pu-240 in addition to Pu-239), is about 15-17 kg of Pu-240, a weapons poison because it spontaneously emits neutrons, causing the bomb to "pre-detonate" or fizzle out. Reactor-grade material, however, contains about 20 per cent Pu-240.

Therefore, usually, plutonium from research reactors, where material can be drawn before the higher isotopes, like Pu-240, form over time in the core, is used for weapons purposes.

To maximise the explosive yield of a weapon, bare material is never used. The fissile core in a weapon is surrounded by a thick blanket of a reflector material, which scatters the neutrons emitted during fission back into the core so that they are not lost out into the environment but cause more number of plutonium atoms to fission and increase the energy yield.

A suitable reflector material is that which scatters neutrons much more than it absorbs them and, at the same time, is light so that it does not add greatly to the weight of the weapon. Beryllium metal (density 1.85 gm/cc) fits the bill admirably. So, all nuclear weapon designs incorporate a thick beryllium shell around the weapon core.

For an efficient weapon, and not a crude "fizzle" variety, a beryllium (Be) reflector is a necessity. With a Be reflector, the critical mass comes down to about 4.5-5 kg.

Data on Be production in the country over the years, and its off- take by the department of atomic energy (DAE), has been recently given by this year's report of the Comptroller and Auditor General (CAG) on scientific departments.

It is from this that one is able to conclude that no proper weapon could have been fabricated in all these years after the Pokharan experiment in 1974. That is, to know whether the emperor who is not seen in public has clothes or not, you look at the royal tailors' orders.

The Pokharan device perhaps used Be imported long ago because, at that time, the country had no beryllium production facility. Establishing such a facility became essential for various strategic needs of the country in the areas of defence (for light weight components), space (for light weight gyros), atomic energy (for various nuclear applications) and electronics (in the form of copper beryllium alloy products), because export of beryllium has been embargoed since then by the key Beryllium producing countries of the world.

Fortunately, India has one of the largest deposits of beryllium ore in the world and the idea of such a facility was a feasible one.

Based on feasibility studies done by the DAE in 1977, a beryllium pilot plant (BPP), with a facility for producing vacuum hot pressed (VHP) blocks was commissioned in the year 1982 in Vashi near Bombay.

Its originally envisaged annual capacity was 250 kg of VHP blocks and 10 tonne of copper-beryllium (Cu-Be) alloy (for electronics applications). Later, this was revised to 200 kg of metal and 8 tonnes of Cu-Be.

An memorandum of understanding signed among the DAE and its principal users, namely, the department of space (DoS) and the department of electronics (DoE), required that the DAE would set up the plant and operate it while the DOS and the DOE would share the capital costs and running expenses according to a formula.

As per this MoU, the DoE would lift the entire produce of Cu-Be and 50 per cent of Be metal while the other 50 per cent would be lifted by the DoS.

Herein lies the curious element. If there had been a post-Pokharan policy to produce weapons, the DAE would have been slated to lift a certain fraction of the Be produced, but it was not. Indeed, according DoS sources, after the plant was commissioned, the DAE seemed to have lost its interest in beryllium. There is only one interpretation for this. That the DAE did not need the metal for want of a directive from the government on the weapons front.

Further, even though, according to the DAE, technical and operational viability of the plant had been demonstrated by continuous production and supply, the total quantity of metal and alloy produced from 1982 to 1993 was 5.87 per cent and 5.33 per cent, respectively, of the envisaged capacities. The cost of production was also very high.

The CAG has given figures of production and off-take for a 11- year period from 1982. Of a total installed capacity for this period of 2,200 kg of Be metal, only 129.17 kg had been produced. Of this, the DoS lifted a total of 101.43 kg while the DAE lifted only 10.05 kg. The total stock of Be in balance in BPP, till 1993, was 17.69 kg.

During 1982-89, as per the MoU, DAE's off-take was supposed to be zero. But, when in 1989 the DoE pulled out of the MoU for envisaged electronics demand for Be not materialising, the DAE lifted 8.04 kg. During 1989-93, however, DAE's requirement was projected at 12.63 kg but it has finally lifted only 2.01 kg, thus totalling its off-take over 11 years to 10.05 kg.

The other important use of Be is in its use as beryllium-oxide blocks in research reactors like Purnima-I, II and III. The metal is also used in the fabrication of neutron sources for nuclear research and technology.

The DAE, in recent years, has started fabricating such sources and a substantial amount of Be metal is likely to be used there. Even 10.05 kg is not sufficient material for one weapon. So, if we account for all these uses, fabricating a deliverable weapon with what would be left with the DAE out of the 10.05 kg is out of the question.

A rough estimate for the amount of Be required, even for a not too good a reflector, for a critical mass of, say, 8 kg of plutonium would be about 20 kg in the least. Even if the DAE commandeers all the stocks of Be that is in the plant's stocks, it may be just enough for fabricating one efficient weapon.

So, the scenario that the above analysis indicates is that there is no bomb in the Indian basement, unless, of course, the figures of production provided to the CAG are not the actual ones.

Whether this policy of nuclear restraint in the post-Pokharan phase is deliberate or is willy-nilly a result of inefficient beryllium production at BPP, only the DAE knows.

Chinese Trade Minister Meets With Officials

Calls on President

BK1706103794 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 1530 GMT 16 Jun 94

[Text] China has expressed its willingness to support entry of India into the Asia-Pacific Economic Caucus, APEC. This was conveyed by the Chinese minister for foreign trade and economic cooperation, Ms. Wu Yi, when she called on the prime minister, Mr. Narasimha Rao, in New Delhi today. During the meeting, the two leaders felt that there is enormous potential for bilateral trade between the two countries. They appreciated the complementary qualities between India and China and said that there is a rich potential for establishing joint ventures for third-country markets. It was also emphasized that both countries should work for increasing direct bilateral trade and to avoid as far as possible the reexport trade.

Confers With Steel Minister

BK1906072894 Delhi Doordarshan Television Network in English 1630 GMT 17 Jun 94

[Text] A delegation of the Indo-China Joint Economic Group under the leadership of Chinese Foreign Trade and Economic Cooperation Minister Ms. Wu Yi held a meeting with the minister of state for steel, Mr. Santosh Mohan Dev, in New Delhi today. At the meeting, Ms. Yi said China will support India's entry into the Asia-Pacific Economic Forum. Both the leaders felt that there is tremendous scope for enlarging trade between the two countries.

Announces Signing of Trade Accords

BK2106101394 Delhi THE ECONOMIC TIMES in English 16 Jun 94 p 24

[Text] Fresh trade worth $20 million has been contracted between India and China during the current visit of the Chinese minister for foreign trade and economic cooperation, Ms Wu Yi, to India.

This was disclosed by Ms Wu while addressing a meeting organised jointly by the Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry (Ficci) and the Associated Chambers of Commerce and Industry of India (Assocham) under the aegis of the Joint Business Council (JBC) here on Wednesday.

The trade contract envisages an import of $5 million worth of raw silk and $7.5 million worth of pig iron from China and an export of $7.5 million worth of iron ore to China, she said.

She said the Indian government and China were striving for a direct trade link to do away with the intermediaries. She said both the governments were already seized of the issue.

Exuding optimism about the two-way trade and economic cooperation between the two countries, she said there would be more exchange of business delegations and also economic cooperation in areas like science and technology between the two countries.

Later, addressing a press conference, she said the Chinese government was very strict about anti-dumping regulations, and said penal legislation would be brought out shortly for those exporters who were indulging in export of products at artificially low prices, and also indicated that the international trade licence of these exporters would be cancelled if warnings on dumping are not heeded.

Earlier, at a meeting between Chinese businessmen and members of Ficci and Assocham, a senior official of the external affairs ministry disclosed that a double taxation avoidance treaty would be signed shortly between the two countries.

Other steps being taken to establish direct trade links between the two include setting up of bank branches in each others' country to circumvent the problems being faced in opening letters of credits and establishing direct shipping lines and air services.

Officials of the external affairs ministry present during the meeting informed that the Reserve Bank of India and the Peoples Bank of China would shortly sign an agreement for setting up branches in each others' country. They said the State Bank of India was ready to set up a branch in Shanghai soon.

In his address, the Assocham president, Mr G H Singhania, said that taking advantage of the recent spurt in Sino-Indian bilateral trade, which presently hovered around $600 million, the JBC should set a target of $3 billion in the next three years.

Iran

Bomb Explodes in Crowded Shrine in Mashhad

Blast Rips Through Prayer Halls

LD2006121794 Tehran IRNA in English 1211 GMT 20 Jun 94

[Text] Mashhad, June 20, IRNA—A bomb went off this afternoon here in one of the crowded prayer halls in the mausoleum of the Imam Reza (as) [peace be upon him], killing and injuring tens of people who had gathered there to commemorate 'Ashura.

Over 60 injured people have been transferred to the hospitals here. Most of the people who have been injured had come from different cities all over the country to commemorate the anniversary of the martyrdom of the Imam Husayn today which is known as 'Ashura.

As a rule every year on this day, mourners flock to Imam Reza's mausoleum to observe the mourning ceremonies for Imam Husayn.

Imam Reza is the eighth imam and Imam Husayn is the third imam of the infallible household of the Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) [expansion unknown]. Both imams were martyred by the tyrannical rulers of their times.

Mojahedin-e Khalq Implicated

LD2006135594 Tehran IRNA in English 1343 GMT 20 Jun 94

[Text] Mashhad, June 20, IRNA—Security sources here have told IRNA that the security officials are busy investigating into the bombing of the mausoleum of Imam Reza (a.s.) [peace be upon him].

Clues found by the security officials point out to the involvement of terrorist Mojhedeen Khalq [Mojahedin-e Khalq] organization in the bombing to mark the anniversary of the beginning of their campaign of terror against the Islamic Republic, June 20, 1981, the sources said.

According to the sources the law enforcement forces in the area have found typewritten tracks [as received] which indicate "the followers of the armed uprising of June 20th", calling themselves "the mojahed sons of Iran", have taken responsibility for the bombing.

Death Toll Said To Reach 70

LD2006142194 Tehran IRNA in English 1411 GMT 20 Jun 94

[Text] Mashhad, June 20, IRNA—The toll of the dead has risen to 70 and the injured to 114 in the aftermath of this afternoon's bomb blast in the mausoleum of Imam Reza (a.s.) [peace be upon him].

A caller to IRNA who called himself the spokesman for the terrorist Mojahedeen Khalq Organization (MKO) said that MKO has taken the full responsiblity for the blast. The caller said that the bombing was meant to avenge the death of "martyrs of June 20th uprising". He said that MKO was planning more acts of subversion in "the following days." The caller then finished his conversation, which lasted for 90 seconds, by yelling obscenities at the officials of the Islamic Republic of Iran and hung up.

On June 20, 1981 MKO operatives began their campaign of terror against the then nascent Islamic Republic of Iran.

TV Shows Aftermath of Explosion

LD2006152294 Tehran IRIB Television First Program Network in Persian 1430 GMT 20 Jun 94

[Excerpt] Today, on the day of Husayn's 'Ashura and simultaneous with the mourning ceremonies for the Lord of the Martyrs Aba 'Abdallah al-Husayn, peace be upon him, and at a time when Islamic Iran was engulfed in mourning and the holy shrine of Imam Reza was particularly filled with lovers of Prophet Muhammad's household, unfortunately a bomb exploded inside the Imam Reza's shrine. Reports received indicate that dozens were martyred or injured.

The accident happened when the pilgrims were mourning the anniversary of the demise of the Lord of the Martyrs and the area around the shrine was filled with mourners. The pictures you can see now were taken a few hours after this heart-rending incident, which was perpetrated by the ruthless hypocrites [Mojahedin-e Khalq Organization]. As a result of this unprecedented crime part of the holy shrine was also destroyed.

A statement obtained in Mashhad in the wake of this heart-rending tragedy shows that the hypocrites committed this criminal deed.

A report prepared by our correspondent, who arrived at the scene of tragedy few minutes after the incident, indicates that the bomb weighed perhaps about five kilos and was planted under a column above the holy shrine, in the south-western sector of the eighth Imam's grave site.

It is necessary to mention hat several years ago too, the hypocrites intended to carry out a similar criminal deed in the holy shrine of Imam Reza, but the agents responsible were arrested. Their action today was perpetrated to mark the anniversary of the 20 June 1981 incident. On that day the ruthless hypocrites staged a last-ditch movement against the sacred regime of the Islamic Republic. But they were crushed, thanks to the people's presence and ever-lasting unity. [passage omitted]

Khamene'i Issues Condolences

LD2006154394 Tehran IRIB Television First Program Network in Persian 1430 GMT 20 Jun 94

[Text] Dear viewers: I have just been informed that His Eminence Ayatollah Khamene'i, the esteemed leader of the Islamic revolution, has sent the following message:

In the name of God, the compassionate, the merciful. [Koranic verse in Arabic omitted] We belong to God and to God we shall return. With sorrow and regret we were informed that the criminal hand of the enemies of Islam has been tainted with a great crime and, by desecrating the holy and pure shrine of Imam Reza, they have massacred a number of innocent people at the holy shrine of the eighth Imam, peace be upon him, on Imam Husayn's 'Ashura.

With this action the hypocritical, hostile, and cruel enemies have shown that they adhere to no humanitarian standards, and that their enmity against the brave and pious nation has no bounds or limits.

The blind-hearted and treacherous hypocrites [Mojahedin-e Khalq] have shown that they attach no value to the holy shrine of the member of the household of piety and purity; that such a great and holy time and place is no obstacle to their bloodthirsty and bestial nature and their savage grudge against the Iranian nation. The curse of God and His subjects be on those criminal hands and those black hearts.

With such deeds the enemies of the Iranian nation have demonstrated their weakness and impotence and proved that they are doomed to isolation and destruction.

I express condolences to the Hidden Imam and to those families whose dear ones have been sacrificed because of the malevolence and crime of the enemies and to the great, brave, and steadfast nation of Islamic Iran. I pray that those martyred in this heart-rending tragedy will receive the loftiest rank.

I call on the authorities and the law-enforcement bodies to seriously pursue the perpetrators of this crime and, in the shortest possible time, bring to justice those blood-sucking bats. [Koranic verse in Arabic] And those who do wrong shall surely know by what overturning they will be overturned.

Cabinet Declares Day of Mourning

LD2006155294 Tehran IRIB Television First Program Network in Persian 1430 GMT 20 Jun 94

[Text] In a statement just released, the Cabinet of the Islamic Republic of Iran expressed its condolences following this tragedy and announced that 21 June would be a national day of mourning throughout the country. The text of the statement follows:

In the name of God, the merciful, the compassionate. We belong to God and to Him we return. On the

anniversary of the martyrdom of the lord of the freedom-loving people of the world, Husayn Bin Ali, peace be upon him, and the devoted children and followers of that immaculate imam, and when the lovers of the school of Husayn and followers of the of guardianship in mourning at the shrine of the honorable descendent of the lord of the martyrs, His Holiness Ali Bin Musa al-Rida, the cowardly monafeqin, who have not stopped committing crimes since the victory of revolution, once again in a cowardly act shed the blood of the mourners of Husayn, just as the hated idol regime which shed the blood of mourners on the day of Ashura.

The Mojahedin-e Khalq martyred and injured a number of innocent people at the shrine of His Holiness Rida, peace be upon him. Obviously, history shall not forget this great disrespect to the position of velayat and imamate of His Holiness Rida, peace be upon him, in whose holy shrine and on the day of Husayn's Ashura this crime took place. The hand of divine revenge will squeeze the throats of all evil cowards, who have planned and carried out such a horrific crime. The cabinet of the Islamic Republic of Iran, while expressing congratulations and condolences to the Lord of the Age; his rightful representative the esteemed leader; the sources of emulation; grand ayatollahs; the heroic, martyr-nurturing and brave people of Islamic Iran; the lovers of the school of Husayn and the followers of Imam Khomeyni, God's blessings be upon him, declares tomorrow, Tuesday, 21 June, a day of national mourning throughout the country; and Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday as days of mourning for Khorasan Province. The cabinet prays for forgiveness for the great martyrs, for patience for the families of the martyrs and for rapid recovery of the injured.

Delegation Sent To Investigate

LD2006173694 Tehran IRNA in English 1628 GMT 20 Jun 94

[Text] Mashhad, Khorasan Prov., June 20, IRNA—A special delegation commissioned by the Interior Ministry left Tehran for this northeastern border city to probe into the bomb blast at the Mausoleum of Imam Reza (AS) [peace be upon him] this afternoon in which at least 70 pilgrims were killed and over 114 were injured.

While here, the delegation which comprises officials and experts of the Interior Ministry, will look into the circumstances of the blast.

Latest reports indicate that many of the injured are in critical condition and that the death toll is likely to rise in coming hours.

Relief operations are under way and medical teams are rushing to the scene of the incident.

An informed source said here Monday that among those injured are several women and children and five Indian nationals.

Law enforcement forces here announced they have arrested a number of individuals suspected of being involved in the bomb blast at the mausoleum of Imam Reza (AS) today.

A source close to the law enforcement forces said that the forces would employ all their might to chase and smash the network of criminals. A special squad has been formed here to render help to those injured in the incident. An official at governor general's office regretted that there were several women and children among those injured.

In addition to the loss of life the bomb blast caused it has also inflicted damage to the mausoleum building as well. Technical experts are assessing the extent of damage to launch repair works. The interior of the mausoleum which has decoration with mirrors has been damaged and it seems that some of those injured have been wounded due to the falling mirror pieces.

Informed sources say that the bomb blast has caused no damage to the tomb.

Ministry Reduces Casualty Figures

LD2006195694 Tehran IRNA in English 1830 GMT 20 Jun 94

[Text] Mashhad, June 20, IRNA—A special representative of the Interior Ministry announced here Monday that 25 people had died and 70 had been injured and hospitalized as of now (11:00 pm local time) as a result of the bomb blast this afternoon at the mausoleum of Imam Reza (a.s.) [peace be upon him].

These are the first official figures announced after a tally of the eyewitness reports on the number of the dead and the injured showed that 70 people were dead and 114 were injured.

The Interior Ministry representative added that some of the injured were in critical condition and that there was a possibility that death toll might rise. "But we are all doing our best to save those injured," he said.

'Terrorist Act' Denounced

LD2006204194 Tehran IRNA in English 1953 GMT 20 Jun 94

[Text] Tehran, June 20, IRNA—The terrorist Mojahedeen Khalq Organization (MKO) has once again committed a heinous crime, this time at the mausoleum of Imam Reza (A.S.) [peace be upon him].

Since June 20, 1981, the people of Iran have been victimized by this terrorist outfit that has always underestimated the resolve and the indomitable spirit of the people of Iran, a spirit that will not allow the MKO to reach its unholy aims.

The formation of the so called Liberation Army in Iraq on the part of the MKO at a time when parts of Islamic

Iran was occupied by Ba'thist forces was another vain attempt by MKO to get out of the impasse in which they found themselves.

Repeated setbacks, including their notorious failure in Mersad operations, caused many of MKO rank and file to be disenchanted with the leadership.

Most political observers believe that by targeting the people as they did today they are stepping on the same path as Saddam's regime that victimized the Iranian civilian populace instead of facing the valiant Iranian forces at the front.

As a matter of fact the post-revolution history of MKO testifies to the fact that they have preferred to target the innocent people.

Just recently, a failed attempt by MKO on the life of Hojjatoleslam Abaie, the Friday prayer leader of Mashhad, was meant to create the same sense of insecurity here in this city.

Today's crime in the mausoleum of Imam Reza was a terrorist act for which the MKO is directly held responsible. In addition to the terrorist MKO, their supporters such as Saddam's regime, the U.S., Britain and some European countries who have spared no efforts in supporting the terrorist outfit have to answer to the people of Iran why the innocent people were so butchered today at a mausoleum whose sanctity for centuries no one had dared to violate, a place wherein up to today no one had dared to shed anyone's blood.

Radio Condemns Mojahedin-e Khalq

NC2106085994 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian 0345 GMT 21 Jun 94

[Commentary by News Research and Commentary Group]

[Text] In the name of God. The terroristic and shattering incident which resulted from the Monafeqin [hypocrites—pejorative term for Mojahedin-e Khalq Organization, MKO] planting a bomb in the holy shrine of the eighth imam, peace be upon him, which has resulted in over 100 martyred and injured, has greatly wounded the religious and human sensitivities of the Iranian people and the Muslims of the world. It has generated a wave of abhorrence among the people and the officials and is being condemned at home and abroad.

The question that arises here is: What was the objective behind this unprecedented crime? Why did the cold-hearted Monafeqin choose a holy site such as the hallowed shrine of Imam Reza—peace be upon him—for this crime and why violate its sanctity?

According to political observers, the firm bond between the people and the Islamic system is the most important objective that the criminals have targeted in this latest atrocity. Right from the onset of the [Iranian] sixties decade, when the misanthropic visage of the Monafeqin was revealed, the bond between the devout Muslim people of Iran and the Islamic system has constantly been the target of their attacks. However, due to the popular bias of the Islamic system which is endowed with an extensive popular base as well, all the plots of the Monafeqin against this system were foiled.

Following the demise of Imam Khomeyni, the great leader of the Islamic Revolution—may God's peace be upon him—the powers of world arrogance have sought to drive a wedge between the people and the Islamic system by resuming their plots. The grand ceremonies on the anniversary of the demise of the imam a few weeks ago and the extensive support and allegiance of the people for the lofty status of the Velayat-e Faqih [supreme jurisconsult], once again inflicted defeat on the powers of world arrogance.

Failure to undermine or change the course of the Islamic Revolution has aroused the ire of the powers of world arrogance and its hypocrite agents to the extent that on the anniversary of Husayn's 'Ashura [tenth day of Moharram, when Prophet Muhammad's grandson, Husayn, was martyred], they attacked a group of mourning people of Iran in the holiest site in our country. This atrocity, however distasteful, has been endured with Husayn-like revolutionary fortitude by the Muslim people of Iran. Similar crimes by the blind-hearted [kurdel] Monafeqin, which include their attacks on worshipers at Friday congregations, the martyring of some Friday imams and people, have not been able to disrupt the bond between the people and the system. On the contrary, these crimes have served to further consolidate this bond and thus to disgrace the enemies of the people and Islam, more than ever.

MKO Denies Involvement

NC2106075494 (Clandestine) Voice of Mojahed in Persian 0600 GMT 21 Jun 94

[Text] The Mojahedin-e Khalq Organization [MKO] vehemently condemned the bomb explosion on Monday morning in Mashhad and announced: The Khomeyni regime's linking this criminal act to the Mojahedin and the Iranian Resistance is an absolute lie.

The MKO office in Paris issued a statement declaring this stance, saying: An MKO spokesman vehemently condemned the explosion at the shrine of Imam Reza, peace be upon him, in the holy city of Mashhad and has said that the Khomeyni regime's linking such a criminal act to the Mojahedin and the Iranian Resistance is an absolute lie and its objective is merely to tarnish the image of the just and extensive resistance of the people of Iran against the religious and terrorist dictatorship of the clerics.

This spokesman added: The Iranian Resistance would never resort to such criminal actions which would desecrate the sanctity of the infallible imams, and would cause such an extensive loss of life and [word indistinct]

among the innocent people. This filthy and criminal action is only in the interest of the clerical regime.

On numerous occasions in the past, the regime has planted bombs and resorted to such acts, including hurling a grenade at the French Embassy and the Air France office in Tehran, ascribing these acts to the MKO.

We now draw your attention to the interview by the leader of the Iranian Resistance, brother mojahed Mas'ud Rajavi, on the atrocity perpetrated on Monday by the misanthropic clerics in the hallowed precincts of the shrine of Imam Reza, peace be upon him.

Mas'ud Rajavi, leader of the Iranian Resistance, condemned the heinous atrocity of an explosion in the sacred precincts of Imam Reza's shrine in Mashhad by the terrorist dictatorship of the clerics on 'Ashura [tenth day of Moharram] which resulted in martyring and wounding a large number of innocent pilgrims and damage to the tomb of Imam Reza, peace be upon him, and he conveyed his condolences to the people of Iran. He described it as a profane, antihuman, and anti-Islamic crime on the part of the ruling tyrannical Yazidi [Yazid was Umayyad Caliph in Damascus, and considered a heretic] clerics.

The leader of the Iranian Resistance stressed that the objective of the Khomeyni regime in staging the explosion in the holy precincts of the Imam Reza shrine, linking it to the MKO, is nothing but a precursor to a series of terrorist acts in the future against the Iranian Resistance which in the past have included the aerial attack on the National Liberation Army bases, explosions in offices and bases of the Iranian Resistance, and the assassinations of Resistance activists abroad.

Some days ago, the Khomeyni regime disseminated consummate lies, claiming that the MKO had launched an attack on the Ilam border, western Iran, in which some persons had been killed and wounded.

Rajavi added: The criminal clerics are entrenched in a deep political and economic crisis and are unable to combat the proliferating dissatisfaction and increasing resistance by the Iranian people. They do not find any recourse but to embark on such inauspicious and bestial crimes and in the holy precincts of the Imam Reza shrine at that. This is an unprecedented crime which no other dictator has resorted to before.

Rajavi stressed: The cruel clerics have—since the heroic uprising by the people of Mashhad—[words indistinct] continued to seek revenge and harassed the people of Khorasan Province and the pilgrims to the shrine of Imam Reza. He continued: The Khomeyni regime is seeking to justify its next crime and thus to arouse the religious sentiments of the people and to tarnish the face of the MKO, who—because of their deep devotion to Islam, the religion of mercy and liberation—enjoy greater credibility among the Iranian people. They therefore chose the day of 'Ashura, the site of the holy shrine of Imam Reza, and the anniversary of 30 Khordad—the day when the MKO uprising against the regime was initiated—for perpetrating this crime.

The statement issued immediately by Khamene'i, the leader of the clerical regime, linking this explosion to the MKO, and the threatening propaganda by the regime, based on vengeance against the MKO, are part of this previously formulated scenario.

While recalling the setting on fire of the Rex Theater in Abadan, and the killing of innocent people in the last few months of the shah's rule, the setting ablaze [as heard] of the precincts of the Holy Ka'bah by agents of the Khomeyni regime in 1366 [year beginning 21 March 1987] Rajavi emphasized that 'the clerical regime—despite its claims to being a protector of Islam—has gone a step further and has massacred innocent pilgrims in the Imam Reza shrine, the most hallowed site in all of Iran. The unprecedented crime is an indication of the incurable crises in Iran, and the abject impotence of the clerics before the resistance of the Iranian people.

He added: In addition, the vestiges of the Khomeyni regime—in view of the lack of participation on the part of the people in the anniversary ceremonies for Khomeyni—are seeking to damage the Imam Reza shrine and by violating its sanctity, they wish to replace it with the temple of idols in which Khomeyni is interred. Rajavi called on the United Nations, Islamic Conference Organization, the Islamic governments, international organizations that are defenders of human rights to condemn this appalling atrocity and to send a team to Iran to investigate this crime.

In order to thwart any deceitful actions by the clerical regime, the Iranian Resistance deems the presence of its representatives necessary in an international delegation to investigate this incident. This is the insistent demand of the people and the Resistance of Iran to the international community who should not permit the criminal clerics to escape unscathed after committing such an unprecedented crime.

[Signed] The Secretariat of the National Resistance Council of Iran

Majles Condemns Bombing

LD2106100994 Tehran IRNA in English 0818 GMT 21 Jun 94

[Text] Tehran, June 21, IRNA—The Islamic Consultative Assembly (Majles) in an announcement Monday strongly condemned the criminal act by the Mojahedin-e Terrorist Organization (MKO) in bombing the mausoleum of Imam Reza (A.S.) [peace be upon him] and said that the crime has added to the record of subservience of the MKO grouplet to the global arrogance.

The announcement further added that the dreadful incident has not only injured the feelings of Iranians but those of other Muslims throughout the world.

The bomb went off in one of the crowded prayer halls of the mausoleum Monday afternoon, killing 25 and injuring 70 pilgrims who were mourning Ashura, martyrdom anniversary of Imam Hoseyn, third member of the household of the Prophet (pbuh) [peace be upon him].

Agents of global arrogance have committed many crimes in the post-revolution era, the announcement said adding that such a sacrilege act was another black page of the record of the traitor MKOs.

Condemning the terrorist act, the announcement condoled the leader of the Islamic revolution Ayatollah 'Ali Khamene'i and bereaved families of the martyrs.

In another development, head of the Islamic Propagation Organization (IPO), Hojjat ol-Eslam Mahmud Mohamadi 'Araqi sent a message to the leader of the Islamic revolution, expressing condolence over the incident.

The official also called on the security, law-enforcement and judiciary forces to take speedy measures for the arrest of the culprits.

Shrine Reopens to Pilgrims

LD2106103994 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian 0930 GMT 21 Jun 94

[Excerpts] Latest reports received from Mashhad indicate that the holy shrine of Imam 'Ali Bin Musa al-Reza, peace be upon him, was opened this morning to the pilgrims eager to pay their respects. Our colleague has dispatched the following report:

In the wake of the bloody tragedy of Mashhad and the massacre inside the holy shrine of Imam Reza, the shrine opened at 1130 today to the enthusiastic pilgrims. [passage omitted]

Funeral ceremonies for the Ashura day martyrs in Mashhad will be staged in the city tomorrow morning.

President Decries 'Shocking Crime'

LD2106111694 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian 0930 GMT 21 Jun 94

[Text] President Hashemi-Rafsanjani, while expressing condolences on the innocent martyrdom of the pilgrims of the Haram-e Imam Reza, may peace be upon him, in the hands of anti-revolutionary and savage people, stated that this bitter incident on Ashura day, when the Iranian people's attentions were focused on Karbala, showed more clearly the nasty nature of the enemy of Islam and Monafeqin [Mojahedin-e Khalq Organization, MKO] and caused great shame to their supporters who have given them safety and provided them with propaganda means and possibilities; and backs them.

Our country's president who was speaking this morning at a meeting with the officials of the Ministry of Housing and Urban Development and Housing Foundation, added that the Muslim nation of Iran has experienced such difficult and bitter incidents before, however, this shocking crime of such magnitude, and in a holy place next to the sacred tomb of Imam Reza, may peace be upon him, created a new situation of bitterness among our people.

Hashemi-Rafsanjani stressed that this shows the foolishness and height of their evilness to slaughter the pilgrims of Imam Reza who had come with great difficulties from various villages and cities to visit the holy shrine and were engaged in performing their prayers. This action will further increase the awareness and loyalty of the people and is proof of the rightfulness of the sacred regime of the Islamic Republic of Iran.

At this meeting, which was held on the occasion of the anniversary of the earthquake that occurred in Gaylan and Zanjan, the president said that planting a bomb and killing innocent people in a place where there has never been security obstacles does not require guerrilla power and bravery, and proves only their lack of goal and savagery.

Velayati on Prospects for Tajikistan Peace Talks

LD1806135794 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran in English 1130 GMT 18 Jun 94

[Interview with Foreign Minister 'Ali Akbar Velayati by unidentified correspondent; place and date not given—recorded]

[Text] [Correspondent] What is the major problem in the way of peace in Tajikistan?

[Velayati] In the name of God, the compassionate, the merciful [preceding phrase in Arabic]. The main problem is the lack of mutual understanding, which has been available since the very beginning of negotiations. But this problem needs time to be solved. I mean, if we want to solve this problem we need more time. If you take a look at the result of the talks that they had in Moscow and also the preliminary statement that they had in ceremonial session, you will see that may be there are some progress. As I said in my interview, at the beginning they were not ready to talk together. And both of them used to be very angry against another one. Now the nature of their presence is a positive step which has been taken by them. So we can say that cautiously we are optimistic and we do hope that after few days of talks they can reach some more positive points. This is the national desire of the people of Tajikistan. They want to put an end to these internal conflict because they have lost many lives and they are facing, the people of Tajikistan are facing a national disaster. They have difficulties even for providing the raw material for their very simple life. Lack of sanitation, lack of food, lack of transportation, continuation of killing and slaughters and assassination have made the people of Tajikistan

frustrated. People are very disappointed. That is the national desire that now the time is ripe for a national reconciliation.

[Correspondent] It seems no specific plan for restoring peace in Tajikistan has been offered. Do you think a clear peace plan will come under discussion in the current round of negotiations in Tehran?

[Velayati] Of course, this is the task of the special envoy of the secretary general of the United Nations. But as far as we could understand of what he has said he has tried to make a cease-fire at the beginning as a fist step; because the establishment of the cease-fire will give opportunity to both sides for continuation of talks and decreasing of tension; while the continuation of assassination and killing and slaughters will increase tension. And if tension is increased or is being increased they cannot stop the hostility. So, the cease-fire is the first step that should be established unconditionally, without any precondition. That is what we could understand from the special envoy of the secretary general of the United Nations.

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